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SWEETTIME ANIMAL STORIES



SLICKO

THE JUMPING SQUIRREL



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RICHARD BARNUM





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Then, she scrambled up on Bob's shoulder and put her cold, soft nose on his cheek. (Page 124) *Frontispiece*



*Kneetime Animal Stories*

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SLICKO, THE  
JUMPING SQUIRREL

HER MANY ADVENTURES

BY

RICHARD BARNUM

Author of "Squinty, the Comical Pig," "Mappo, the  
Merry Monkey," "Tum Tum, the Jolly Elephant,"  
"Don, a Runaway Dog," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY  
HARRIET H. TOOKER

NEW YORK  
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PUBLISHERS



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## KNEETIME ANIMAL STORIES

By Richard Barnum

*Large 12mo. Illustrated. Price per volume  
40 cents, postpaid*

SQUINTY, THE COMICAL PIG

SLICKO, THE JUMPING SQUIRREL

MAPPO, THE MERRY MONKEY

TUM TUM, THE JOLLY ELEPHANT

DON, A RUNAWAY DOG

**BARSE & HOPKINS**

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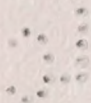
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*Slicko, the Jumping Squirrel*



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# SLICKO, THE JUMPING SQUIRREL

## CHAPTER I

### SLICKO LEARNS TO JUMP

**H**ALF WAY up the side of a tall tree there was a round hole in the trunk. The hole was lined with soft, dried leaves, and bits of white, fluffy cotton, from the milk-weed plant. And, if you looked very carefully at the hole, you might see, peering from it, a little head, like that of a very small kitten, and a pair of very bright eyes.

But it was not a kitten that looked from the little hole in the trunk of the tree. Kitties can climb trees, but they do not like to live in them. They would rather have a warm place behind the stove, with a nice saucer of milk.

Now if I tell you that the little creatures who lived in this hole-nest had big, fluffy tails, and that they could sit up on their hind legs, and eat nuts, I am sure you can guess what they were.

Squirrels! That's it! In the nest, half way



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up the big tree in the woods, lived a family of gray squirrels, and I am going to tell you about them, or, rather, more particularly, about one of the little girl squirrels whose name was Slicko.

One morning Mrs. Squirrel, who had gotten up out of the nest early, to go out and get some breakfast for her little ones, came back very quickly, jumping from one tree branch to another, and fairly scrambling down into the nest where the little boy and girl squirrels of her family were still asleep.

"Why, what's the matter, Mother?" asked Mr. Squirrel, in the queer, chattering language he and his wife used. "Why are you in such a hurry this morning? See, you have dropped a lot of nuts!"

He looked out over the edge of the nest, down to the ground, where he saw some of the nuts Mrs. Squirrel had dropped. She had been bringing them home for breakfast.

"What made you run so?" asked Mr. Squirrel, who had stayed home with the little ones, while his wife went after nuts.

"Well, I guess you'd have hurried too," said the mamma squirrel, "if you saw what I saw!"

"What was it?" asked Mr. Squirrel, and he pulled his head in from the nest-hole, so that if any bad animals were down below on the ground they could not see him.



"It was a man, with a dog and a gun," said Mrs. Squirrel. "He was out hunting, and I'm almost sure he saw me!"

"My, that would be too bad!" exclaimed Mr. Squirrel. "Do you think he followed you to shoot you?"

"I hope not," said Mrs. Squirrel. "I ran as fast as I could when I saw him, and I did not hear his gun go off, but I did hear the dog bark."

"Hum!" said Mr. Squirrel, in his own language, and he seemed as worried as your papa might be if he heard there was a bad animal, or a runaway horse, coming after you. "So the hunter did not shoot his gun, eh?"

"Not that I heard," answered Mrs. Squirrel. "But he may be trying to find this nest."

"I'll look out and see if he is coming," said Mr. Squirrel.

"Be careful he doesn't see you," said Mrs. Squirrel.

"I will," replied her husband. And then he carefully, carefully peeked out of the hole of the nest in the hollow trunk of the tree. Squirrels are smarter than we think. Though they do not know how to shoot a gun, they know that a gun can hurt them, and when one is shot off in the woods, all the squirrels, and the birds and wild creatures, are very much frightened, and run to hide.



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So Mr. Squirrel looked out to see if he could see a man with a gun and a dog. But he saw nothing, and he was glad of it.

"I guess he didn't see which way you went, Mamma," he said to his wife. "Now we will give the children their breakfast, and then we must begin teaching them their lessons. For if hunters, with dogs and guns, are to come to our woods, it is time our little ones knew how to look after themselves, and how to hide, and jump to safe places."

"I think so, too," said Mrs. Squirrel. "Wake up, children!" she cried. "Come, Slicko! Hurry up, Chatter! Come, Fluffy and Nutto! Breakfast is ready!"

Four little squirrels—two boys and two girls—awoke in the tree-nest and sat up on their hind legs in the soft leaves and cotton. They saw the nuts their mother had brought, and at once began eating them. That was all they had to do to get ready for breakfast.

The squirrel children did not have to dress, for they wore their fur suits all the year 'round, never taking them off. In winter their fur grew much thicker than in summer, to keep them warmer.

The squirrel children did not have to wash themselves in a basin. All any of them did was to wet one paw with his little red tongue, and



wipe it over his face. Then he was washed. But you wouldn't like to do that, I'm sure.

"Come, children, eat your breakfasts," said Mrs. Squirrel, "and then you are going to have a new lesson."

"A new lesson!" chattered Slicko, one of the girl squirrels, to her mamma, speaking in a language that you or I could not have understood. "What kind of a lesson is it going to be?"

You see the squirrel children had been taught how to gnaw open hard nuts, and to take out the sweet, juicy kernels inside. They had been taught how to climb trees, and wash their faces. But there were many other things for them to learn. Slicko was the largest of the squirrel children, and she asked the most questions.

"What is your lesson going to be, Mother?" Slicko wanted to know.

"I hope it's going to be a sleeping lesson," said Fluffy, one of the boy squirrels. "I'm sleepy yet," and he yawned and stretched himself, just like a little monkey.

"Oh, fie on you!" said his papa. "Squirrels should be lively, and hop about when they awake in the morning. Come now, if you have finished your nuts, your mamma and I will teach you a new lesson, and one that you must learn well, or there may be danger for you."

"Pooh, I'm not afraid! What sort of dan-



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ger?" asked Nutto, the other boy squirrel. He was called Nutto because he was so fond of eating chestnuts.

"Oh, I'm afraid," said Chatter, the littlest girl squirrel. "Don't say such scary things, Nutto," and Chatter looked over the edge of the nest as though she might see a big hawk-bird swooping down, for her papa and mamma had told her to always hide when a big hawk flew over the woods. But no hawk was in sight, now.

"You are going to have some jumping lessons," went on Mr. Squirrel. "After you learn to jump, I will tell you why."

You see the papa squirrel did not want just then to tell the little ones about their mamma having seen a hunter-man, with a dog and gun, for fear, if he did, they might be too frightened to come out of the nest and learn to jump. But Mr. Squirrel knew there was no danger near, just then, at any rate, and he wanted his children to be as brave as they could be.

Soon, after the breakfast nuts were eaten, the four little squirrels went out on a straight branch, that stuck out from the tree trunk near the nest. Papa and Mamma Squirrel stood there with them.

"Now this is the idea," said Mr. Squirrel, in his chattering language, that you or I could not



have understood, but which was as plain to the little squirrels, as a papa dog's language is to a puppy, or a mamma cat's mewling to her little kittens. "You are all going to learn to jump," said Mr. Squirrel.

"What's a jump?" asked Slicko, who, as I have said, was always asking questions. She asked more questions than her two brothers and her sister together. But Slicko wanted to know about things.

"See!" exclaimed Mr. Squirrel. "This is a jump. Now I am on this limb beside you. Now watch!"

He gave a little spring, or jump, through the air, and landed on the branch of another tree, some distance off.

"That is a jump," said Mr. Squirrel. "It is getting from one branch to another without running or walking. It is a quick way of walking, I suppose you could call it, and when you are in a hurry, as when some one is chasing you, and you have no time to run or walk, you must jump. Now let me see you jump down here, just as I did. Come on, all of you!"

"Yes, go on!" said Mamma Squirrel, who was still on the tree limb by the nest. "You little squirrels must learn to jump. That is the one, big lesson left for you to learn."

Slicko looked at Chatter. Fluffy looked at



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Nutto. Then they all looked down at their papa on the lower limb.

"Come on! Don't be afraid!" called Mr. Squirrel. "Jump! You won't be hurt!"

"But—but I'm afraid," said Nutto, who, you remember, had said he was not at all frightened.

"Oh, you mustn't be afraid," said Mr. Squirrel. "There is nothing to hurt you. I'm sure you can jump if you try. Give a good, hard spring, and you'll land down here on the limb beside me. Besides, if you do fall, the ground is covered with soft leaves, and you won't be hurt. Come on. Jump!"

But the little squirrels did not want to.

"You go first," said Nutto to Fluffy.

"No, I'd rather watch you go first," spoke Fluffy.

"Maybe Chatter will go," suggested Nutto. "The girls are not as heavy as we are, and they won't be hurt if they fall."

"One of you boys ought to go first," said Slicko. "You are always saying you're not afraid. You jump first, Nutto, and Chatter and I will come after you."

"Oh, I don't want to," said Nutto.

And there the four little squirrels stood on the limb near the nest, each one afraid to jump. Their papa stood waiting for them, and he kept thinking that if the hunter and his dog should



come along then, the little squirrels would be in danger of being shot, if they did not know how to jump out of the way, and hide.

"Come on. You must learn to jump!" called Mrs. Squirrel.

Slicko took a long breath. After all, though she did ask a number of questions, Slicko was rather brave.

"I'm going to jump," she said.

"That's the girl!" cried her father. "Come on; jump down here beside me!"

Slicko moved over close to the edge of the tree branch. Then, with another long breath, such as a boy takes before he dives, when he is in swimming, Slicko jumped from the tree branch.

She found herself sailing through the air. At first she was greatly frightened. She spread out her tail, and then she found that she was floating through the air almost as gently as a bird's feather. Her tail helped her to fall gently, for it was just like a big, open umbrella, and held her up, as the parachute holds up the man who jumps from a balloon.

"There goes Slicko!" cried her mamma. "Slicko is learning to jump!"

Down, down, down through the air went Slicko, the jumping squirrel. Would she land on the tree branch beside her father? Slicko certainly hoped so, but still it was her first jump.



## CHAPTER II

### SLICKO MEETS SQUINTY

**T**HAT'S the way to do it!" cried Mrs. Squirrel, as she saw Slicko sailing down through the air toward the limb on which was perched Mr. Squirrel.

"Don't be afraid. You'll get down all right!" called Mr. Squirrel.

Slicko fluffed out her tail as wide as she could. She felt that it was her tail which would save her from landing too hard and hurting her paws. Nearer and nearer she came to the limb on which was her papa.

"Here you are!" cried Mr. Squirrel, a moment later, and with a little shaking up, Slicko found herself safely beside her dear papa.

"Wasn't that nice?" asked Mr. Squirrel, moving over close beside his little girl.

"Oh, indeed it was," said Slicko, breathing a little faster than usual, for this was her first jump, you see.

"Now, Chatter, Fluffy and Nutto! It's your turns!" said Mrs. Squirrel. "See, Slicko made



a good jump, and you can each do the same. Come on."

"Yes, do!" said Mr. Squirrel. "You really must learn to jump, and then I'll tell you why."

"Oh, is it a secret?" asked Chatter, the other little girl squirrel. She was a sister to Slicko.

"Yes, it's a secret," answered Mrs. Squirrel.

Now I am not quite sure about it, but I suppose girl squirrels want to hear a secret just as much as real girls do, and I have always found that if you wanted to get a real little girl to do anything for you, that she would do it ever so much more quickly, if she thought there was a secret about it.

Perhaps that is why Chatter made up her mind to jump as Slicko had done. Mind, I am not saying for sure, for I don't know. But maybe it was so.

Anyhow, Chatter moved over close to the edge of the tree limb. She looked down to where her papa and Slicko sat up on their hind legs, watching her.

"Here I come! Catch me!" spoke Chatter.

"All right—don't be afraid," answered her papa. "You won't fall."

Chatter gave a jump, and down she went. Almost before she knew it, she had landed on a smooth place on the limb, close beside her sister and papa.



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"There! I did it!" cried Chatter, in delight.

"Of course you did!" said Slicko. "Wasn't it fine?"

"It certainly was," agreed Chatter.

"Come now! The girls have jumped, and you boys mustn't let them get ahead of you!" called Mr. Squirrel, to Nutto and Fluffy. "Come on, jump down here."

Well, of course the boy squirrels weren't going to let the girl squirrels beat them, so first Nutto jumped, and then Fluffy.

"There, now you have all learned to jump," said Mrs. Squirrel. "Of course this is only the beginning. You must practice every day, just as you did when you were learning to climb trees, by sticking your sharp toe-nails in the soft bark. Every day you do a little jumping."

"But why, Mamma?" asked Slicko. "Is that the secret?"

"That is the secret," answered Mr. Squirrel. "You must learn to jump because your mamma saw a hunter-man, with a gun and dog in our woods this morning, and we must be ready to run away, and hide, if he should find our nest."

"And, as you cannot always run or walk, and climb trees, you must need to know how to jump, so you can jump out of danger. That is why we gave you jumping lessons to-day. Now, when you are rested, you must jump some more. And



you must learn to jump up as well as jump down, though jumping down is easier."

The squirrel children asked many questions about the hunter-man, with his dog and gun, and Papa and Mamma Squirrel told their little ones all they knew, warning them always to hide when they saw a man with a gun.

"Well, I'm going to learn to jump farther and higher," said Slicko. "No hunter is going to catch me, if I can help it."

So Slicko began practicing jumping, going from one tree branch to another, up and down, and sideways. The papa and mamma squirrel watched on all sides while their children were jumping, to make sure the hunter-man did not come.

Whether it was because Slicko was larger and stronger than her brothers and sister, or because she practiced harder, I do not know. But it is certain that, in a few days, Slicko was the best jumping squirrel in that part of the woods. She could jump farther than could Chatter, and even though Nutto and Fluffy were boy squirrels, Slicko could beat them.

"Yes, Slicko is certainly a fine jumper," said Mrs. Squirrel, to her husband one day. "She can jump almost as far as we can."

"Well, I hope she is careful," spoke Mr. Squirrel. "I was over near the swamp, to-day,



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looking to see if I could find any sweetflag root for supper, and I heard a noise like a gun. That hunter-man is still in the woods."

"Maybe it was thunder you heard," said Mrs. Squirrel.

"No, I'm sure it was the gun of the hunter-man," went on her husband. "Well, I am glad the little ones can jump. It will help them to keep out of his way."

"Indeed it will," said Mrs. Squirrel.

For a week or so after this, the little squirrels practiced jumping every day. As soon as they had had their breakfast of nuts, or oats or wheat, which their papa or mamma brought in from the farmer's fields, the little squirrels would begin jumping.

Sometimes they would run up and down the tree trunks, and again they would pretend to hide under the leaves, for their parents had told them that was a good way to keep out of sight when there was any danger in the forest.

The Squirrel family lived in the woods, a very nice woods indeed; with many green trees growing in it. The ground in some places was covered with brown leaves, that had fallen off the trees, and in other places there was soft green moss, like the velvet carpet in the parlor at your house.

And, not far from the tree where Slicko and



the other squirrels lived, was a pretty brook that ran through the wood, making nice music as it trickled over the stones. The water was cool, and good to drink, and often Slicko, and her brothers and sister, would come to the edge of the brook to bathe, or get a drink.

One day, after she had practiced her jumping lesson for some time, Slicko said to her sister, Chatter:

"Come on, let's take a little walk in the woods. It is nearly time for chestnuts to be ripe, and we may find some."

"Oh, I don't want to go," Chatter said. "I am tired from having jumped so much. I am going to lie down on the green moss, and go to sleep."

"Oh, then will you come, Nutto?" asked Slicko, of her brother.

"No, for Fluffy and I are going to hunt hickory nuts," said the boy squirrel. "You had better come with us. Chestnuts are not ripe yet. You won't find any. But, if you come with us, you'll find some hickory nuts."

"Oh, I think I can find some chestnuts," spoke Slicko, and then, as neither her brothers nor her sister would come with her, the little girl jumping squirrel started off in the woods by herself.

She ran along on the ground a little way. Then she climbed up a tree, and running out on



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a branch of that, she leaped from the end of it to the end of another branch, in a tree a little farther on. Slicko was a good jumper.

In this way she hurried on until she was quite a way from her home-nest.

All of a sudden, Slicko heard a noise in the bushes, as if some big animal were breaking a way through them.

"My! I hope that isn't the hunter-man and his dog!" exclaimed Slicko in a whisper to herself. "I had better be careful, and take a look before I go on any farther."

So the little jumping squirrel cuddled down under some leaves on the tree branch where she was sitting, and peered out. At first she could see nothing, except the bushes below her waving as something pushed through them. Whatever it was, it seemed to be coming nearer and nearer her tree.

Slicko felt sure it was the hunter-man, and she was getting ready to give a big jump, and hurry home to the nest, when, all at once, she saw something sort of pink and white come out of the bush. As soon as Slicko saw this, she knew it was not a hunter-man, for it walked on four feet, whereas a hunter walks on two feet.

"Why, it's a little pig!" exclaimed Slicko, looking down. She knew it was a pig, because, not far from the woods where she lived, there



was a farm, and on the farm was a pen of pigs. Slicko had seen them once.

"Yes, that's a pig! I'm not afraid of him," said the little squirrel girl. "Hello!" she called down to the pig, who was rooting along in the ground, looking for something to eat, I suppose.

"Hello!" called Slicko. "What's your name?"

"Oh, hello! How you frightened me, calling that way!" answered the pig. "My name is Squinty. What's yours?"

Now if you had been listening to this talk between the two animals—the squirrel and the pig—all you would have heard would have been something like this:

"Chatter! Chat! Chat! Chit! Chit! Chirp! Chir-r-r-r-r-r-r!"

And then:

"Uff! Uff! Wuff! Wuff! Ugh! Ugh!"

One was the squirrel talking, and the other was the pig answering.

Of course it would not sound like real talk, such as you use, but it was real enough for Slicko and Squinty, and they could understand each other very well. They could also understand man-talk, your talk, also, as I will tell you a little later. But neither Slicko nor Squinty could speak man-language.

"Ha! So your name is Squinty, eh?" asked



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Slicko, of the little pig. "Why are you called such a funny name?"

"Because one of my eyes squints a little," was the answer. "See!" Squinty looked up to show Slicko, and the little pig was such a funny picture, as he stood there, with one eye partly shut, and the other wide open, with his head on one side, and one ear cocked forward and the other backward, he was so funny, I say, that Slicko could not help laughing.

"Huh! What are you laughing at?" asked Squinty, in his funny grunting voice, with his little flat, rubbery nose wiggling sideways, and also up and down.

"I am laughing at you," answered Slicko. "Excuse me, but I can't help it. You are so funny, and you have such a funny name."

"Oh, I don't mind being laughed at," said Squinty, with a sort of pig-laugh. "I am glad if you want to laugh, for it is better to laugh than cry. And I don't mind my funny name," he said. I think that was very nice of Squinty to say, don't you?

"I am glad I met you," said the little girl squirrel. "At first I thought you were a hunter in the bushes."

"And I thought you were some one chasing me, when you called that way," said Squinty. "But you haven't told me your name yet."





Then Slicko led the little pig to where there were some  
acorn nuts, and Squinty ate them.

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"I am Slicko, the jumping squirrel," was the answer, "and I am hunting in these woods for some chestnuts. What are you doing here?"

"I am here because I have run away," said Squinty. "I am looking for something to eat. Are hickory nuts good?"

"Very good," Slicko answered. "I'll see if I can find some for each of us."

The little squirrel found some hickory nuts, but they were so hard that Squinty, the comical pig, could not eat them.

"I guess you'd like some acorns, they are softer," Slicko said.

"Indeed I would, thank you," spoke Squinty.

Then Slicko led the little pig to where there were some acorn nuts, and Squinty ate them. Very glad he was to get them, too, for he was quite hungry.

"Why are you called Slicko?" asked Squinty, when he did not feel quite so hungry as at first.

"My mamma called me that," answered the little squirrel, "because my fur is so slick and shiny."

"It is a good name," said Squinty. "Don't you want to travel along with me, through the woods, and have adventures?"

"Thank you, no. I guess not," replied Slicko. "Hark! What's that?"

They both listened, and heard a sound like:



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"Chatter! Chatter! Chat! Chit! Chat! Chir-r-r-r-r!"

"What is it?" asked Squinty, in a whisper.

"That is my mamma calling me," answered Slicko. "I must go back to the nest now. Good-bye, funny little pig."

"Good-bye," answered Squinty, and he went on, looking for adventures. He had many of them, and I have told you about them in the first of these books, called "Squinty, the Comical Pig." He was bought by a boy, taught to do many tricks, and finally ran back again to his home in the pen on the farm.

After Slicko had said good-bye to Squinty, the comical pig, the little girl squirrel ran and jumped on through the woods, for her mother kept calling to her to come to the nest.

"My, I hope nothing has happened," said Slicko, as she hurried on. "And I didn't find any chestnuts," she said, as she looked at the few hickory nuts she was bringing home. Fluffy and Nutto will laugh at me. But I don't care."

Pretty soon Slicko reached the nest.

"My! Where have you been?" asked her mamma.

"Looking for chestnuts," answered Slicko.

"Did you find any?" asked Nutto, as he and his brother came climbing up the tree just then.

"No, but I found some hickory nuts, and some



acorns, and I gave some acorns to a cute little pig," said Slicko, explaining how she had met Squinty.

"I wish we had gone with you," said Fluffy. "I'd like to have seen that pig. Come on, Nutto. Let's go out and see if we can find him in the woods."

"No, you must not go away!" chattered Mrs. Squirrel. "I want you all to stay here. Something has happened, and we shall have to go away from our nice nest."

"Go away from our nest!" cried Slicko, in surprise.

"Yes," answered Mrs. Squirrel. "It is no longer safe to stay here. But here comes your papa. He will tell you all about it. We are in great danger, and that is why I called you all back. Now listen to what your papa has to say."



## CHAPTER III

### SLICKO GOES ON A VISIT

**M**R. SQUIRREL came along, hurrying and jumping through the leafy branches of the trees as fast as he could come. When he was still some distance away from the nest, he took a long jump, and landed on the limb near the hole in the tree.

"Did you see him?" asked Mrs. Squirrel.

"Yes. He is in the woods," chattered Mr. Squirrel. "But he may not be here for some minutes. We have time to run and hide. And we had better not keep together. We must all go different ways, and then he will not find us so easily."

"Oh, what is it?" cried Slicko. "What has happened?"

"The hunter-man, and his dog, have found out where our nest is," said Mrs. Squirrel. "At any minute he may come here to shoot us, or catch us."

"Oh, how dreadful!" cried Chatter, and even Nutto, who was supposed to be very brave, for a squirrel, looked frightened.



"But don't worry too much," said Mr. Squirrel. "I have seen the hunter in time—him and his dog and gun—and we will get safely away from him. Come now, we will separate, each going a different way; then the hunter will not find us, I hope."

"But where shall we go?" asked Slicko. "And what shall we do for something to eat, and a place to sleep nights, if we go away from our home-nest?"

"Well, you squirrels are old enough now, to hunt food for yourselves," said Mrs. Squirrel. "I am glad of that, for I shall not worry so much about you. And you know how to run and jump."

"I am glad we learned how to jump in time," said Slicko.

"Yes, if you had waited, and kept on putting it off," said Mr. Squirrel, "you would not now be ready to run and hide away from the hunter, and be able to take care of yourselves. As for a place to sleep, your mother and I are going to send you all on visits to our friends, or relations. You can stay with them for a while, until it will be safe for us all to come back to our nest again."

"Oh, then we are going on a visit!" exclaimed Slicko.

"Something like that, yes," answered her



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father. "And we must hurry, too, for the hunter may be here any minute. I passed him in the woods, and he was coming this way."

"Did he see you, Papa?" asked Nutto.

"No, for I kept well behind the leaves, and hurried on. My! how that dog did bark, though. He seemed very savage."

"Squinty, the comical pig, told me of a dog he knew," said Slicko, "but he said that dog was kind and gentle. His name is Don."

"This dog's name wasn't Don, I'm sure of that," spoke Mr. Squirrel. "But we must not stay talking here. Scatter, every one of you! Nutto and Fluffy, you go over to Grandpa Beechnut's nest, and stay with him. I don't believe the hunter knows where that is."

"Chatter, you can stay with Mr. and Mrs. Acorn, the squirrels who live in the hollow stump. Your mother and I will go off in the woods, and make a new nest, so if we can not come back to our old one, we will still have a home when winter comes."

"But what am I to do?" asked Slicko. "Where am I to go?"

"I have not forgotten you," said Mrs. Squirrel. "You can go over and stay with your Aunt Whitey until it is safe. Your aunt will be glad to have you, for she lives all alone, and she has room for only one small squirrel in her nest be-



side herself. You run over there, and tell her all that has happened—how the hunter has found our nest.”

“And go quickly!” suddenly cried Mr. Squirrel. “Here the hunter-man comes now—with his dog.”

Just then there sounded through the woods:

“Bow wow! Bow wow! Bow wow!”

“That’s the dog,” said Mr. Squirrel. “Hurry, children, and don’t forget the lessons we have taught you.”

“We won’t!” promised Slicko.

Then came another sound, a dreadful noise, like thunder.

“Bang!” sounded through the woods, making the leaves on the trees shake.

“That’s the hunter’s gun!” exclaimed Nutto. “Run, everybody!”

Off through the woods scampered Slicko, her father and mother and her brothers and sister. Slicko climbed up one tree, jumped into another, and still another.

“I don’t believe the hunter and his dog will get me,” thought Slicko, as she hurried on toward the nest where her Aunt Whitey lived.

Pretty soon the hunter-man and his dog came to the foot of the tree where Slicko used to live.

“Ha! There’s that squirrel nest I saw the other day,” said the man to himself. “I wonder



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if there are any in it? I'll wait a while, and see if I can shoot any of them for my dinner."

"Bow wow! Bow wow!" barked the dog. Perhaps he, too, wanted some squirrels for his dinner.

All around the foot of the tree ran the dog, barking as loudly as he could. Maybe he was hoping he could scare the squirrels out of the nest so his master could shoot them with his gun.

The man waited and waited, looking up at the hole in the trunk of the tree, where he knew the squirrels had lived. But he did not know they had gone. That was the time the squirrels were smarter than the hunter.

Several hours passed, and still the man waited. Every now and then he would look up at the hole, with his gun all ready to shoot, and the dog, who had been running off in the woods, looking for more squirrels, would come back, barking louder than ever.

"Well, I guess those squirrels have gone away, Carlo," the man finally said to his dog. "It is of no use for us to stay here. Come, we will go look for other squirrels to shoot."

"Bow wow! Bow wow! That will be fun!" barked Carlo. Of course being a dog, he did not know any better.

And so the hunter-man went away from the



empty nest, where Slicko and the other squirrels had lived.

All this while Slicko, the jumping squirrel, was hurrying along through the woods, toward the nest of her Aunt Whitey. Slicko's aunt had that name because there was a white spot on the end of her tail. Mrs. Whitey and Mrs. Squirrel were sisters, and of course that made the squirrel, with the white on the end of her tail, Slicko's aunt. And Slicko liked Aunt Whitey very much. There were always plenty of nuts in Aunt Whitey's nest, and Slicko, as well as her brothers and sister, liked to come on a visit. But this time Slicko was all alone.

Pretty soon the little jumping girl squirrel came to the tall tree where Aunt Whitey lived.

"Now I must be very careful," thought Slicko. "I must wait, before running in, to see if any hunter-men, or dogs, or other enemies are watching me. For if they are, they would see where I go in, and they could find the nest, and maybe catch Aunt Whitey and me."

Squirrels, like birds and other woodland creatures, do not like human beings to know where their nests or homes are. So they take care to make the front doors in such a way they can not easily be seen, and when the forest creatures go in, they always look around first, to see that no enemy is watching. In that way they keep their



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homes, or nests, secret. They have to, for they have so many enemies.

Slicko looked all around, and, seeing no dogs, wild animals or hunter-men on the watch, to spy on her aunt's nest, the little squirrel scrambled up the tree, sticking her sharp toe nails in the soft bark as she had been taught to do.

When Slicko was half way up, she saw a hole in the tree, just such a hole as at her nest at home. This was the front door to the home of her aunt.

Slicko gave two or three taps on the bark with her front paw.

The little girl squirrel always did this when she called on Mrs. Whitey, so the squirrel lady would know it was one of her little friends or relations, and not a bad owl, or hawk-bird, wanting to eat her up.

Slicko expected to hear her aunt chatter, as she always did:

"Come in and have some nuts!"

But there was no answer.

Slicko knocked again with her little paw, and then, thinking her aunt might be asleep, the little jumping squirrel gave a little hop down inside the nest. It was just like the nest at home, which she and the others had left because of the danger from the hunter-man.

At first, coming in the dark nest, after having



been out in the bright sunlight, Slicko could see nothing. Just as when you come into the house, after having walked along the snowy road from school, you have to wait until your eyes get used to the darker house. It was that way with Slicko.

Pretty soon, however, she could look about the nest, and then her heart grew sad. For she saw that Aunt Whitey did not live there any more. The nest was deserted, and empty. Most of the soft leaves, and the cotton from the milkweed plant had been tossed out. The nest was all upset. Most of the nuts were gone, and it looked as though some boy, or man, or animal had been inside, catching the squirrel lady, and taking the nuts she had stored away to eat.

"Oh, dear!" thought Slicko. "This is terrible! Aunt Whitey has either run away, or been caught. There is no one here to take me! What shall I do? Can I stay here all alone? Oh, dear! Isn't it too bad!"

Slicko cowered down in the empty nest and wondered what she should do, now that she had no home to go back to.



## CHAPTER IV

### SLICKO SEES A CIRCUS

**F**OR a few minutes after jumping down into the empty nest of her Aunt Whitey, little Slicko did not know what to do. It had all happened so suddenly—the breaking up of the family, each one going to a different place to hide, the coming of Slicko to these woods, and the finding of the empty nest—that the little squirrel did not know what to think of it.

Slicko listened as sharply as she could for any sounds of danger. She bent her two little ears forward, just as her mamma had told her to do when she wanted to listen to any far-off sounds. But Slicko could hear nothing.

That is, she could hear nothing that sounded like danger. Of course she could hear the wind blowing through the trees, the singing of the grasshoppers, the call of the birds and noises like that.

And none of these sounds meant any harm to the little squirrel. She had heard them all her life.



"Oh, but it is so lonesome!" whispered Slicko to herself. She did not want to speak aloud in her queer, little chattering voice, for fear some one—like a bad dog or a snake—would hear her. And yet Slicko wanted to talk to some one, even if it was only herself.

She lifted up her head, from where she had nestled it down among the dried leaves in her aunt's nest, and looked about her. The nest was rather dark, but Slicko could see better now. And what she saw made her sure that her aunt had either been taken away by some enemy, or had run off in a great hurry.

For the nest was all upset. The leaves were scattered about, and most of the nuts were gone.

"Well, I guess I'd better stay here for a while," thought Slicko to herself. "There are a few nuts here, and I can eat them when I get hungry. When I want more, I shall have to go out and get them, but, by that time, it may be safe. Yes, I'll stay hereto-night, anyhow."

Slicko peeped out of the opening to the nest—it was a sort of front door to the squirrel house. Slicko could see that it was getting dark in the woods; that night was coming on. And night, Slicko knew, was no time for a little girl squirrel to be alone in the forest.

There were big-eyed owls flying about then, and other enemies that might catch her.



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"So I shall be better off staying in the nest, even if Aunt Whitey isn't at home," thought Slicko. "Poor Aunt Whitey!" she whispered. "I wonder where she can be."

Then Slicko happened to think that perhaps her squirrel aunt might be hiding outside somewhere, as wild animals often do hide, near their nests, or homes, whenever they have been frightened away.

"I'll call to her," said Slicko to herself.

Going softly to the opening to the nest, Slicko put out her head, and called:

"Aunty! Aunty Whitey! Where are you?"

She listened, but all she heard in reply was the singing of a robin, the call of a grasshopper and the noise of the wind in the trees.

"I guess she has gone far off," thought Slicko. "Well, I will stay here until I find some other place to go. Oh dear! If mamma and papa only knew I was here all by myself, they would come to me, or take me with them. But now I shall have to stay all alone. Oh dear!"

It was the first time little Slicko had ever been alone at night, but she was going to be brave. Little animals have to be brave whether they want to or not, and they have to leave their homes and find their own things to eat, much younger than do real children.

So, in a way, animals do not so much mind



being away from their papas and mammas as you children would.

At first Slicko was pretty lonesome. She shivered, and cuddled down in the leaves of her aunt's nest, and wished she had her brothers Fluffy and Nutto, and her sister Chatter, to play with. They had always played little jumping or running games before going to sleep nights. But now Slicko was all alone, and had no one to play with.

But, as I have said, Slicko was going to be brave.

After the little jumping squirrel got over her first feeling of fright, she began to be hungry. There were a few nuts left in the nest, and Slicko ate some of them, and felt better.

"And now I must make a warm place to sleep," she thought. Her mother had taught her how to make herself a bed in the dried leaves, and now Slicko did this. She smoothed out a little hole, and pulled up some leaves that would fall over her, and cover her up like a blanket, when she went to sleep. For though it was not yet winter, it was very cool in the woods at night.

Soon Slicko was fast asleep. Animals go to sleep very easily when they have eaten, and are not frightened. They do not have to be sung to, nor told stories, and they do not have to have



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the light turned down low. They always go to bed without a light.

Once, in the middle of the night, Slicko was awakened. She heard a noise at the opening of the nest, a scratching sort of noise, and it sounded as though some one were trying to come in.

"Oh, dear! I wonder who it can be?" thought Slicko. "But I'm not going to get up to look," she went on. "No, indeed!"

Instead, she covered herself up deeper in the leaves, and tried to go to sleep. She could not, though, for the noise kept up. And then, all of a sudden, something hooted:

"Who! Who! Who! Tu-whoo!"

"Oh, it's an owl!" thought Slicko. "A big owl. But he can't get in here to eat me. I'm safe. Maybe that's the owl that drove Aunt Whitey out of her nest."

Once more the owl hooted, and then Slicko heard the flapping of its wings as it flew away.

"He didn't get me that time," thought Slicko. "But I must be very careful! Very careful!"

Soon the little girl squirrel was asleep again, and when next she awakened, the sun was shining down, through the hole, into the nest.

"Oh, good! It's morning!" chattered Slicko. "Now the owl can't get me."

Slicko knew that owls fly only at night, for



they have such funny eyes, that sunlight makes them almost blind, and they cannot see to catch little squirrels. So Slicko knew she was safe, for a while, at least.

"Now for breakfast, then to wash my face and paws, and we'll see what happens," whispered Slicko to herself. It did not take long to eat the nuts for breakfast. Then Slicko felt thirsty. She knew there was a nice spring of water not far from her aunt's nest, for, when she had come visiting other times, she had gone to it to get a drink.

"And I wonder if it would be safe now?" thought Slicko. "I'll take a look and see."

She peered from the nest and saw nothing to frighten her. Some birds were flitting through the leafy trees, and down on the ground some little hop-toads were jumping about. Perhaps they were playing some game, as you play tag, for you know animals have fun just as children do, though, to be sure, it is a different kind of fun.

"Yes, I'm going to get a drink," said Slicko, and she slipped out of the nest, and began to climb down the side of the tree. But she was very careful how she did it, for she knew danger might be near, though she could not see it.

She ran quickly half way around the tree and stayed there a second, with her body held flat



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against the trunk. Slicko was colored gray, and the tree bark was a sort of gray, so, unless you had looked very sharply, you might not have seen her yourself, until Slicko moved.

While she was holding herself there, very quietly, Slicko was looking about to see if the owl, or any other bad bird, or animal, were in sight. But she saw nothing, and then she scrambled down to the ground, and ran to the spring.

Taking a good drink of the cool water, Slicko washed her paws and face in it. Then she combed out her tail with her claws, for all squirrels are very clean and tidy animals.

"Well, I wonder what I shall do now," thought Slicko. "I guess I'll have to stay in Aunt Whitey's nest for a long time, maybe. I had better look about for more nuts, for when those in the nest are gone, I shall need more to eat. Yes, I will look for nuts."

She started off through the woods, but she had not gone very far, when, all of a sudden, she saw something brown moving up in a tree.

In a second Slicko hid herself under some leaves, and waited. She was in a place where she could watch the brown creature. At first Slicko thought it might be a big snake, or maybe the owl that had tried to get her in the night.

Then, as the brown creature moved closer,





Taking a drink of the cool water, Slicko washed her paws and face in it.

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Slicko saw that it had a long tail, and four legs, and the legs had something like hands on the ends.

"Why, it looks just like a brown, hairy boy!" thought Slicko. "And I'm afraid of boys. Mamma said they were dangerous. I wonder what I had better do?"

Slicko hid deeper down in the leaves, and, a little later, as the brown animal came closer, the girl squirrel saw that it was not the kind of a boy she had ever seen before. For, though boys can climb trees, they can not climb up and down as fast as the brown animal was doing, nor can they hang by their tails. In fact, as Slicko knew, boys have no tails.

And then Slicko heard the brown animal say:

"Ha! Here are some of those chestnuts! I must get some, for, though they are not as good as cocoanuts, they will keep me from being hungry. Yes, I'll get some!"

"Ha!" thought Slicko. "That creature is not a boy, that's sure! And it eats nuts just as we squirrels do. I don't believe it will do me any harm. I'm going out to see."

Slicko crawled out from under the leaves, and, as soon as she moved, the brown creature called out:

"What is that? Who is there? Who is it?"

His voice was a sort of chatter and chirp, like



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that of some bird, but Slicko could understand it pretty well.

"It is I, if you please," said Slicko. "I am a little girl squirrel, and I am staying at my aunt's nest, but she isn't home. Who are you, if you please?"

"I am Mappo, the merry monkey," was the answer. "But I can't see you. Where are you?"

"Down in these leaves," answered Slicko, and she waved her tail, so Mappo could see her.

"Oh, there you are!" cried the monkey, and down he scrambled beside her. "What are you doing here?" asked Mappo.

"I am hiding away from a hunter and his dog," went on the little squirrel. "All our family ran away from our nest, and I came here. But my aunt is gone too, so I am all alone."

"Never mind," said Mappo, kindly, "I am all alone also, so we will keep each other company."

"Where did you come from?" asked Slicko, who had never before seen a monkey.

"Oh, I used to live in a big woods, with my brothers and sisters," said Mappo. "But, of late, I have been with a circus. I ran away from my cage in the circus though, and came to these woods. And I've had the most fun! I met a comical little pig named—"



"Oh, I know what he was named!" interrupted Slicko.

"What was his name?" asked Mappo.

"Squinty!" cried the little girl squirrel. "And he had the funniest nose, and one of his eyes was half shut, and—"

"That's the one!" exclaimed Mappo. "How did you meet him?"

Then Slicko told of having talked to Squinty, and Mappo also told how he had met the comical little pig, just as I have told you in the book about Squinty.

"But you said you used to be in a circus," spoke Slicko, after a while.

"So I did," answered Mappo.

"What's a circus?" Slicko wanted to know.

"What! Have you never seen a circus?" asked Mappo. "Well, I must show it to you. It is not far off. But I am not going back to it right away. Come along."

Mappo, the merry monkey, started off through the forest, with Slicko following. Pretty soon they saw a road in front of them. And, on the other side of the road, were some big white things, that looked like houses people live in.

"Those are the circus tents," exclaimed Mappo. "Listen and you can hear the music."

Slicko sat up on her tail and listened. She heard many strange sounds.



## CHAPTER V

### SLICKO AND TUM TUM

“**M**APPO,” asked Slicko, as she sat under the shade of a tree, near the road, and looked across at the tents in the vacant lot, “is that what you call a circus, Mappo?”

“That is a circus, little Slicko,” answered the monkey, kindly.

Slicko saw the white tents, she heard the bands playing music, she heard men and boys calling out strange words, such as “ice cream cones!” “pink lemonade!” and “peanuts!” The last word was the only one Slicko knew, for she had heard that before.

Once a squirrel who had lived in a city park came to visit Slicko’s mamma and papa. And this city squirrel told how the children used to go to the park and feed the squirrels peanuts. So Slicko knew what peanuts were, when she heard the circus boys and men shouting about them.

“So that is a circus, is it?” asked little Slicko, as she looked at the big, white tents, all gay with



colored flags, fluttering in the wind, and heard the nice music.

"Yes," answered Mappo, "that is a circus."

"And you ran away from it—you ran away from a nice place like that?" asked Slicko in surprise.

"Oh, well, I got tired of being in a cage all the while," said Mappo, the merry monkey. "I am going back again soon, I guess, as it is no fun to have to hunt for things to eat all the while. In the circus, though I did have to stay in a cage, I got all I wanted to eat without any trouble. Yes, I think I shall run back again, soon."

"I should think, if you had run away, they would come after you, to find you," said Slicko.

"They did come once," spoke Mappo, with a laugh. "Once when I was in the woods, talking to Squinty, the comical pig, some circus men came after me to catch me, but I ran away. They haven't caught me yet," and he laughed and chattered, showing his many, white teeth.

For a little while Slicko and Mappo sat in the woods looking at the circus, and then, all of a sudden, the little girl squirrel cried out:

"Oh, Mappo! What are those funny animals, as big as houses, with two tails? What are they?"

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" laughed Mappo, the merry monkey. "Two tails! Ho! Ho!"



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"Well, they *do* have two tails," said Slicko. "What are they?"

"That's just what Squinty, the comical pig, wanted to know," spoke Mappo. "He thought they had two tails also. Ha! Ha!"

"Well, haven't they?" asked Slicko, frisking her big tail.

"No," answered Mappo. "Those are elephants, and they have only one tail. The short thing is their tail, and the long thing, in front of them, hanging down, is their nose."

"Their nose!" cried Slicko. "What a funny nose!"

"It is called a trunk," explained Mappo. "But it is really the elephant's nose. He breathes through it, but he can also use it like a hand. He picks up what he wants to eat in it, and it is hollow, like the hose with which they fill the circus tubs, so we animals can drink. Through his hollow trunk, the elephant sucks up water, squirting it down his throat when he is thirsty."

"What a funny animal an elephant is!" exclaimed Slicko. "And how big! Especially that first one, with the two big, white things sticking out of his mouth. What are those?"

"Those are his teeth, or tusks," explained Mappo. "But you need not be afraid of that big elephant."



"Why not?" asked Slicko.

"Because he is the kindest, and most jolly elephant in the whole circus," went on Mappo the monkey. "His name is Tum Tum, and if you were to meet him you would like him very much."

"Did Squinty, the comical pig, meet Tum Tum?" asked Slicko.

"No, Squinty did not have a chance," said Mappo, "but he saw him. If I can, I'll call Tum Tum over here to see you. I'm sure you'd like him. And he'd give you a ride on his back."

"Oh, I'd be afraid to let him!" exclaimed Slicko.

"Pooh! He wouldn't hurt a fly!" laughed Mappo. "Lots of the children who come to the circus ride on Tum Tum's back. He is very kind to them, and he would be kind to you. Only, if you should see him, be sure to tell him you're not a rat or a mouse."

"Of course I'm not a rat or a mouse," said Slicko. "Why should I tell Tum Tum, the elephant, that I am not, when he can see for himself, if he has any eyes?"

"Well, you do look a little like a great rat," said Mappo. "Not that it's any harm, Slicko. But, you see, Tum Tum and other elephants are very much afraid of rats and mice. I don't know why, unless they are afraid the little crea-



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tures will run up inside their trunks and make them sneeze. But, anyhow, you're not a rat or a mouse. And if you see Tum Tum, be sure to tell him that, the first thing."

"I will," promised Slicko, "but maybe I won't see Tum Tum to speak to."

"Oh, you might," answered Mappo. "You can't tell."

Just then the merry little monkey gave a jump, and cried out:

"Ha! There come some circus men over this way. I think they are going to hunt for me again. I don't want to be caught just yet, and be put back in my cage, so I'm going to run off and hide in the woods again. Good-bye, Slicko. I am glad I met you."

"Good-bye, Mappo!" cried the little girl squirrel. "I am glad I met you, and I'm sorry you're going to run away again. But I won't tell them where you are. I guess I'll go hide, too."

So Mappo, the merry monkey, ran off through the woods one way, and Slicko ran the other, and they did not see each other again for some time.

I might say that I expect to tell you, in a book after this one, some of the adventures of Mappo, the merry monkey, but I have no room for him in this story.

Slicko ran on through the woods, jumping



from tree to tree as she had been taught. She was all alone again, and she was feeling rather lonesome without Mappo, or for some of her squirrel friends.

Slicko made her way back to the nest where her aunt had lived. She rather hoped Mrs. Whitey might be back there, waiting for her, but the nest in the tall tree was still empty. There was no sign of the nice old lady squirrel.

"Well, I guess I had better gather some nuts, and hide them away," thought Slicko. "I may have to stay in this nest a month or more, until papa and mamma make a new home for me, and my sister and brothers."

So Slicko scrambled down to the ground again, and began to gather nuts and acorns. These she carried up to the nest, hiding them away under the leaves. Some she put in a hollow stump, on the ground not far away from the tree where the nest was.

When Slicko had done this, she sat down on her tail, curling it up at her back like a feather, to take a rest, for she was rather tired.

"My!" she thought, as she sat there. "What a lot of things have happened to me since I had to leave my home. An owl got after me, I have seen a circus, I met a monkey and I have seen a creature, with two tails, called an elephant. At least an elephant looks as though it had two



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tails, no matter what Mappo says," went on Slicko. "I wonder if I shall ever meet Tum Tum, and tell him I am not a rat or a mouse? What a funny thing it would be if I did."

Slicko sat on the edge of the nest for some time, and then she began to feel hungry.

"I wish I had some of those peanuts I heard them talking about in the circus," said Slicko in a whisper. "I know they must be good, from what that city-park squirrel said. And I wonder what pink lemonade and ice cream cones are? I don't believe they are good to eat."

You can see that Slicko had many things to learn—things that you know already, such as that ice cream cones are good to eat. But, if Slicko did not know that, she knew other things that you children do not know, such as where to find nuts, and how to gnaw through the shells, and get at the meat without using a nut cracker.

All of a sudden, as Slicko was running toward the spring of water to get a drink, after her dinner, she heard a crashing in the bushes.

"I wonder if that is Mappo coming back," thought Slicko. She looked through the trees, and saw something almost as large as a house, and dark in color, pushing through the bushes.

"Why, it's an elephant—it's Tum Tum!" exclaimed Slicko, as she saw the big creature, with his trunk on one end, and his tail on the other,



and two big, long, white teeth sticking out of his mouth. "Yes, that surely is Tum Tum!"

Slicko spoke the last words out loud.

"Ha! Who is calling to me?" asked the circus elephant in his deep, rumbling voice. "Who is calling me?"

"I spoke your name, Tum Tum," said Slicko. "Here I am, by this old stump."

Tum Tum, the jolly elephant, looked at the little squirrel, and then he began to shiver and shake as hard as he could. He shook so hard that he shook a lot of pine cones down off a pine tree up against which he was leaning.

"Oh my! Oh dear! This is terrible!" cried Tum Tum in his big, deep, rumbling voice. "Oh dear!"



## CHAPTER VI

### SLICKO GOES NUTTING

**S**LICKO was so surprised, at first, by the cries of Tum Tum, and at the fear which the big elephant showed, that she did not know what to think. It really seemed that Tum Tum was afraid of her—of a little, jumping squirrel girl!

Then Slicko happened to remember what Mappo had told her.

"If ever you see Tum Tum," the monkey had said, "tell him at once that you are not a mouse or a rat."

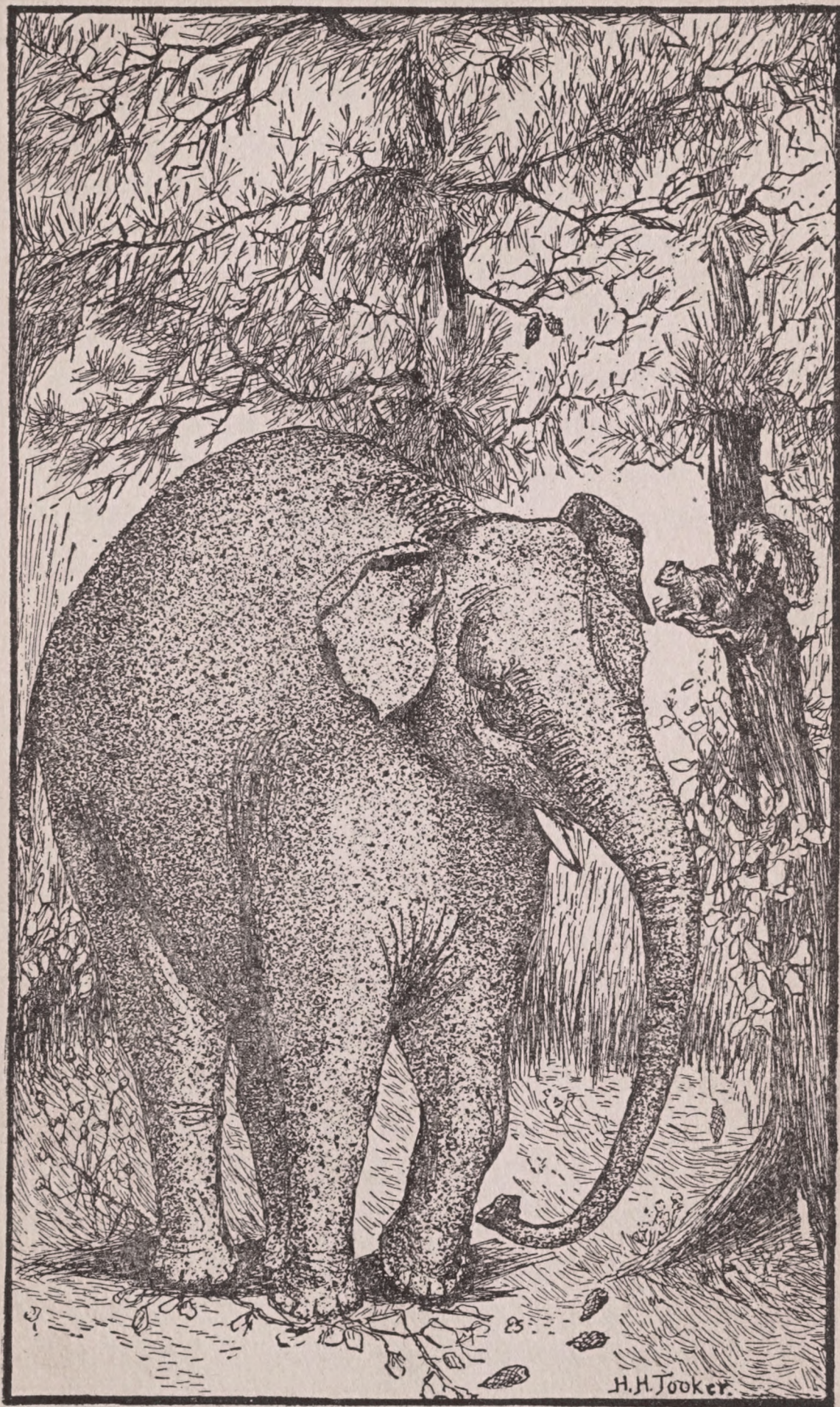
"Ha! That's what I must do!" thought Slicko. "Tum Tum must be afraid of me. I'll speak to him."

Scrambling half way up the trunk of a tree, to make herself higher, and nearer to the big ears of Tum Tum, Slicko cried out in her chattering voice:

"I'm not a mouse, Tum Tum! I'm not a rat!"

"Ha! What's that?" asked the elephant, flapping one of his ears sideways, so he could hear better. "What did you say?"





"I'm only a little girl squirrel, and I wouldn't hurt you for the world," went on Slicko.

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"I said I was not a rat or a mouse—I'm only a little girl squirrel, and I wouldn't hurt you for the world," went on Slicko.

"Oh, I'm so glad!" cried the elephant, and he did not shiver and shake any more, and did not knock down any pine tree cones.

As first it might seem funny for a squirrel to say she would not hurt an elephant, because an elephant is so large. But I have told you that elephants are sometimes afraid of even such a little thing as a mouse.

"So you are not a rat, eh?" asked the elephant of Slicko.

"No, Tum Tum, and I'm not a mouse, either," answered the little girl squirrel.

"Ha! How do you happen to know my name?" asked Tum Tum.

"Mappo, the merry monkey, told me," said the little squirrel girl. "And Mappo told me I was to tell you I was not a mouse or a rat. I won't run up your trunk, and scare you."

"That's good," said Tum Tum. "Now I can see clearly that you are a little squirrel. I like you! But what about that little rascal, Mappo? Where is he? I came out to look for him. They want him back in his cage to ride around the circus ring on the back of a pony, and do other tricks to make the children laugh."

"Oh, he ran away," said Slicko. "He thought



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he heard some men coming after him. He said he did not want to go back to the cage just yet. He wants to have some fun in the woods."

"Well, well! He is a funny monkey," said Tum Tum. "And I came all the way from the circus grounds to find him. But if he is gone, I won't look any farther. I'll go back to my tent, for the men may be coming after me."

"Oh, can't you stay here with me a little while? I am so lonesome!" spoke Slicko.

"Well, I might stay a short time," Tum Tum said. "But what are you doing in the woods all alone, little Slicko?"

Then the little squirrel girl told how she had had to run away from her own nest, and how she had not been able to find her aunt, and how she was now living all by herself in the woods.

"Well, I wish I could stay with you, and keep you company, Slicko," said Tum Tum. "But I belong back in the circus, and I guess you would rather jump through the tree branches, and skip about in them, than go as slowly as I have to go, crashing through the bushes. And I certainly never could climb a tree, and sleep in a nest, as you do," went on Tum Tum, with a jolly laugh.

"No, I suppose not," said Slicko. "You are too big for a nest. Well, if you see Mappo, please send him back to me. I am so lonesome."



"If I see him I will," Tum Tum answered. And then he walked on back through the woods.

"Good-bye, Slicko!" called the jolly elephant. "I have to be in the show this afternoon. I have to make believe play ball, and eat my dinner at a real table, and then I have to play the hand organ with my trunk. Those are some of my tricks."

"Oh, I met a pig who said he could do tricks!" cried Slicko.

"Was his name Squinty?" inquired the jolly elephant.

"Yes," said Slicko, "his name was Squinty."

"I met him, too," said Tum Tum. "He was a comical little pig. But now I must hurry back," and on he went, crashing his way through the bushes. Some day, in another book, I shall tell you all the adventures of Tum Tum, the jolly elephant.

Slicko felt more lonesome than ever when the elephant had left her. She did not know what to do, and she wanted, more than ever, to see her mamma and papa, and sister and brothers again. Then, all at once, Slicko thought of something.

"Oh, I forgot to ask Tum Tum to give me a ride on his back!" exclaimed Slicko. "Mappo said he would, as he was such a kind elephant. I'm going to call to him."



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So Slicko called, in her chattering voice:

"Tum Tum! Tum Tum!"

"Yes, I hear you. What is it?" asked the elephant, stopping.

"Would you please give me a ride on your back," begged Slicko. "Mappo, the merry monkey, said you gave children at the circus rides, and I am so little you would hardly feel me."

"Of course I'll give you a ride!" cried Tum Tum. "I thought I was forgetting something," he went on, as he crashed back through the bushes. "I meant to invite you for a little ride on my back," went on Tum Tum. "Why, I shouldn't feel you any more than I should a feather, Slicko. Besides, I am very strong; I could carry ten children on my back, and hardly know it."

"Oh, indeed you must be very strong!" cried the little squirrel girl.

Tum Tum, with a jolly noise that sounded as much like a laugh as any elephant can make, stood under the branch of the tree on which Slicko was perched.

"Hop down, little squirrel," invited the big, jolly elephant. Down hopped Slicko, landing on the back of Tum Tum, and then what a fine ride she had!

Tum Tum could step over bushes that would



have taken Slicko some time to climb, and some bushes Tum Tum trampled under his big feet as though they were straw.

Other bushes the elephant pushed his big body through, as easily as the clown in the circus jumps off the horse's back through the paper hoop.

"Do you like riding on my back?" asked Tum Tum, swinging along.

"Oh, it is just fine!" cried Slicko, as she sat there, with her tail held over her head like a sun umbrella. "But don't go too far with me, Tum Tum, please."

"I won't," the elephant said. And pretty soon he turned back with Slicko, and left her on the same branch from which she had jumped—right near her aunt's nest.

"Well, good-bye once more, Slicko," called Tum Tum. "I may see you again to-morrow. And if you meet that Mappo, tell him he is wanted back in the circus."

"I'll tell him," promised Slicko.

Once more the little jumping girl squirrel was all alone in the big woods. Somewhere in the forest were her father and mother, and her sister and brothers were somewhere about. But just where, Slicko did not know.

"Well," thought the little creature, in a way squirrels and other animals have of thinking,



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“well, I guess I shall have to stay alone to-night again. And perhaps for many more nights and days. I wonder what will become of me, and if I shall ever see my folks again. Oh dear!”

Slicko felt a little sad for a moment, but then she knew that she would have to be brave, and do things for herself, since there was no one to help her.

“I think I’ll put some more leaves, and some cotton from the milkweed plant, in Aunt Whitey’s nest,” thought Slicko. “That will make it warmer.”

Fixing up the nest so it would be nicer to stay in took Slicko until nearly dark. Then, after she had carried up some nuts to the nest, so she would have them ready for morning, Slicko curled up in the soft leaves and went to sleep.

Nothing bothered her this night. No bad old owl, with big, round, staring eyes, tried to get the little squirrel. Perhaps the owl, which had tried it before, was sure the nest was empty, and that he could not get anything to eat from it. At any rate the owl did not come, and Slicko was glad of it.

In the morning, after her breakfast, having had a drink and washed at the spring, Slicko said:

“I think I had better go off in the woods nutting, to-day. I shall need many nuts to eat, if



I have to stay here all winter, and I had better begin to gather them now before they are all gone."

Slicko knew, as do all squirrels, the best places in the woods to look for nuts. Soon the little girl squirrel had found many chestnuts, acorns, hickory nuts and beech nuts. These she carried, a few at a time, up to her aunt's nest-house.

"If Aunt Whitey should come back, there would be enough for her and me too," thought Slicko.

The store-house of the nest was almost full of nuts, but still Slicko was not satisfied.

"I must get more," she said to herself, "for we may have a long winter, with much snow." Well, Slicko knew how hard the winter was for squirrels, and all animals.

So the next day Slicko went off nutting again. She had not gone very far through the woods before she came to a little grassy place, and there, in the middle of it, Slicko saw a nice pile of nuts, all gathered up, ready to be taken away.

"Oh, that's just fine!" thought Slicko to herself. "The nuts are all in a nice heap, and I don't have to pick them up, one by one, and carry them home. I can take a whole paw full at once."

Now Slicko was a wise little squirrel in some ways. But she had many things yet to learn.



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She did not stop to think that nuts in the woods never heap themselves up in a pile without some animal or some person doing it. Slicko thought the nuts were put there just for her. But it was all a trick, as you shall soon see.

Of course Slicko did not at once jump down to get the nuts. She knew enough not to do that, for she had often been told some animal might be waiting to grab her. So she looked all around, and, seeing nothing, down she scrambled.

As Slicko came nearer to the pile of nuts, and saw how nice they looked, she said to herself:

"Oh, there will be enough for all winter. How lovely!"

But there was something else besides the nuts there on the ground, though Slicko did not see it. If she had noticed it, and had kept out of the way, she might not have had as many adventures as she did have. But little squirrels are not always wise and smart, any more than real children are.

Right up to the pile of nuts scampered Slicko. She took up some chestnuts in her paws, that were like little hands, and then, all of a sudden, something clicked, and snapped, and Slicko felt herself caught by one leg, and held tightly.



## CHAPTER VII

### SLICKO IS CAUGHT

**P**OOOR Slicko was so surprised at first, and her leg pained her so much, from whatever it was that had grasped it, that the little squirrel lay quite still for a moment. Her heart beat very fast, and she thought of the many dangers, which her father and mother had told her might happen to little squirrels.

“And I’m sure something dreadful has happened to me!” thought Slicko, as she looked all around with her bright eyes. “Yes, something dreadful has happened. I wonder what it is. Can it be that an owl, or a hawk or a snake has caught me?”

Slicko tried to think of these different birds and the snake, for each one has a different way of catching a squirrel, and Slicko wanted to make sure which it was that had hold of her.

Then, as she heard no fluttering of wings, which she would have heard had it been a big bird which had caught her, and, as she did not hear the hiss of an angry snake, she felt sure it was none of those dangers.



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"But what can it be that has hold of my leg?" thought Slicko.

She looked down, and there, partly hidden under the grass and the pile of nuts, where Slicko had not seen it before, was a steel trap. And her leg was caught in that trap, between two pieces of steel, that pressed together as hard as the rubber rollers of the wringer press on the clothes on washday.

"Oh dear!" thought Poor Slicko. "I am caught in a trap! Papa and mamma told me to be careful of traps, but I didn't see this one. I guess I was thinking too much of the nuts. Oh dear! What shall I do? How can I get out?"

That is what Slicko thought as she lay there, her leg in the trap, hurting her very much. All animals, when they are caught in a trap, at once begin to think of how they can get out. Some think one way, and some another, but they all think, or else how could some of them get out the way they do? Of course I don't mean to say that animals think just the way we do, any more than they talk the way we do. But they talk and think in a language of their own.

Slicko was not a very old squirrel, and this was the first time she had ever been in a trap. If she had been an older squirrel, she would not have gone near the pile of nuts, for an older



squirrel would have been sure they were put there on purpose to fool some animal.

But Slicko did not think. That was why she was caught in the trap.

"Oh, I must get out!" chattered poor Slicko. "I must get away from here, or some one may come and catch me!"

Slicko tried to pull her leg out of the trap, but the strong spring of it held the steel jaws tightly together. Some animal traps have sharp teeth on the steel jaws that spring together, and they hurt very much. But this trap was not that kind, and Slicko was glad of it. So the only thing that happened to her leg was that it was badly pinched, and squeezed tightly.

Still she knew that if she did not pull herself away, something else dreadful might happen to her.

"Well," said Slicko to herself, when she had tried several times to pull her leg out and could not, "if I can't get loose from the trap, maybe I can pull the trap with me, off into the woods, and I can find some other big man-squirrel to help me get loose. That's what I'll do."

But when Slicko tried to run off, with the trap still fastened to her leg, she found that she could not. The trap was chained to a tree, and Slicko was held fast.

"Oh dear!" cried the little squirrel. "I'm



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never going to get loose. I wish my mamma or papa would come!"

But Papa and Mamma Squirrel were away off in the woods, and they thought their little daughter was safe with her Aunt Whitey. They did not know all that had happened.

Slicko tried and tried again to get out of the trap, or to pull the trap away with her, but she could not. Then, as she was pretty tired, and as her little heart was beating very fast, she lay down to rest.

Finding some of the nuts close to her nose, she began to eat one, for she was quite hungry, even if she was fast in a trap.

After Slicko had eaten a few nuts, she felt better. She was a little stronger, too, and she thought perhaps now she could get out of the trap, but, when she tried, the jaws of it held her as tightly as ever.

"Oh dear! Oh dear! Oh dear!" cried poor Slicko.

All at once she heard, off in the woods, the sound of bushes being trampled down. Twigs and branches snapped and broke, and Slicko knew something was coming.

"I hope it isn't a bear, or any bad animal that will get me," thought the little girl squirrel. With her bright eyes snapping, Slicko watched and waited.



All of a sudden, through the bushes, straight for the place where Slicko lay, near the pile of nuts, came a boy. Slicko knew it was a boy because he was just like the hunter-man, only smaller. But the boy had no gun, and Slicko was glad of that. However, there was a dog with him, and for that, Slicko was sorry.

"Here, Rover! Rover!" called the boy to his dog, for Rover was running all about, sniffing under stones and bushes. "Here, Rover! Let's see if we have anything in our trap," the boy called.

"Ah! so he is the one who put the trap here to catch me!" thought Slicko. She could understand some man or boy-talk, though she could not speak it herself, just as your dog understands how to run to you when you say: "Come here!" But, though he understands you, he cannot make you understand him.

"Bow wow!" barked the dog with the boy.  
"Bow wow!"

"Yes, I hear you. What is it?" the boy asked.

"Bow wow! Wow! Wow!" barked the dog, and Slicko saw him looking straight at her.

I guess the dog was trying to tell the boy there was something in the trap, but the boy didn't understand dog-talk very well.

"Bow wow!" barked the dog again. And then, as Slicko tried to hide herself down under



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the leaves, where the dog could not see her, that dog barked louder than ever.

"Bow wow! Wow! Wow! Woppity-wop-wow!"

"Well, you're making a lot of fuss!" exclaimed the boy, as he pushed his way through the bushes. "Have you caught something, Rover, old boy?"

"Bow wow! Yes!" answered the dog.

Then the boy came up to the trap.

"Ha! I *have* caught something!" he cried. "A squirrel, too! I thought I would if I piled up those nuts there, and hid the trap near them. Ha! I've caught a squirrel."

"Oh, what a mean boy you are!" said Slicko to herself. "You set the trap on purpose to catch me! Oh, how mean!"

Now this boy was not mean exactly, or cruel, as you shall soon see. He was only thoughtless, as most boys are. He never really intended to hurt the little squirrel. Perhaps he thought the fur on a squirrel's leg was so thick that the trap, springing shut, would not hurt. And, really, Slicko was not hurt such a terrible lot. But she felt badly enough, let me tell you.

"Yes, I have a squirrel!" the boy cried, and he seemed real glad of it. "Now I can take it home and tame it."

Slicko did not know what "tame" meant, but



she thought if it meant being caught by your leg in a trap, that she would not like it at all.

"Yes," went on the boy, "I'll take the squirrel home and tame it, and teach it tricks."

"Ha! Tricks!" said Slicko to herself. "Where have I heard that word before? Oh, I know! Squinty, the comical pig, could do tricks, and so could Tum Tum, the jolly elephant."

"Well, maybe if this boy teaches me some tricks, it will not be so bad. Then I could go home and surprise Chatter, Fluffy and Nutto. I don't believe they can do tricks."

Slicko watched the boy and dog. The dog was barking and jumping about in the leaves. He seemed quite excited at seeing the squirrel in the trap.

"Quiet, Rover! Lie down!" said the boy, and Rover minded like the good dog he was.

"Now, let's see how I am going to get this little squirrel home," the boy went on. "I ought to have brought a box."

"I wonder if he means take me to *his* home or *my* home?" thought Slicko. "I guess he must mean *his* home, for he doesn't know where mine is—I don't know myself."

"I hope the trap didn't break her leg," the boy went on. "I don't believe it did, for the spring wasn't very strong."



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"Oh, I'm sure my leg is broken," thought poor Slicko. "It hurts very much."

The boy put out his hand very slowly to take the little squirrel out of the trap.

"I wonder if you'll bite," he said.

"Ha! That's so. I *can* bite!" said Slicko out loud, but, to the boy, her talk only sounded like chattering.

Slicko had sharp teeth, and very strong. They had to be, for with them she had to gnaw off the shell of hard hickory nuts. So Slicko knew she could bite fiercely if she wanted to.

"But I don't know that I want to," thought Slicko. "If I bite, the boy will be angry at me, and if he is to teach me tricks, it will be better if we are friends. No, I won't bite him, though I could if I wanted to."

Slowly and carefully, the boy put out his hand toward Slicko.

"I wish I had a thick pair of gloves," he said. "Then if you bit, it wouldn't hurt. I got bit by a squirrel once, and I don't want it to happen again."

"I won't bite you," said Slicko, though of course the boy could not understand her. Now his hand was on the soft fur of Slicko's back, and he stroked her gently.

"Poor little squirrel," said the boy. "I'm sorry you were caught in the trap, and I hope



you're not hurt much. I—I guess I'm never going to set any more traps."

The boy felt sorry now, for poor Slicko looked at him with such a sorrowful look in her bright eyes, that it really seemed as if she were crying tears of pain—that is, if squirrels can cry. They can feel pain, at any rate.

So you see, though it was a sad thing for Slicko to be caught in a trap, in one way it was a good thing, for it taught the boy a lesson, and made him more kind-hearted.

"I'll soon have you loose, little squirrel," the boy went on. Then he quickly pressed on the spring of the trap with one hand, while he held Slicko with the other. The jaws of the trap came open, and Slicko's leg was loose. And oh! how good it felt not to be squeezed as she had been.

Then, all of a sudden, Slicko felt herself lifted up, and put into a soft, dark place—a place as dark as the deepest, darkest part of the nest at home—the cellar part where the nuts were stored away for winter.



## CHAPTER VIII

### SLICKO'S NEW HOME

**S**LICKO, the jumping squirrel, found herself all huddled up in a heap in the soft, dark place. She did not feel much like jumping just then—indeed she could not have jumped if she had wished, for there was no room.

Besides, her leg, that had been caught in the trap, hurt her quite a lot, though not so much as it had at first.

“I—I wonder where I am,” thought Slicko, as she tried to look about her. Soon she could see better than at first, and, as a squirrel’s eyes are made to see in the dark, much as are the eyes of the owl-bird, Slicko could soon make out where she was.

She was down inside a sort of bag, very soft and cozy, but even though it was so soft, Slicko could not get out. She tried, but there was no hole. Even the top, through which she had been put in, was tightly closed.

Slicko tried her teeth on some of the soft stuff, but it tickled her little red tongue, so she stopped.



"I wonder where I am," thought Slicko, again.

And, though she did not know it, she was in the boy's coat pocket, and he had pinned the flap down over it, so the little squirrel could not get out. Later on Slicko took many trips in that same pocket, and was not afraid, but this time her little heart beat very fast, for she did not know what was going to happen to her.

"Well, I don't believe I'll try to catch any more squirrels," said the boy. "I'll take this trap home with me."

"Ah, that's good!" thought Slicko. "If he takes the trap away, no more squirrels will be caught. That's very good!"

"And I guess I'll take some of these nuts home to feed my new squirrel," went on the boy, speaking out loud the way boys do sometimes, especially if they have their dogs with them.

"Bow wow!" barked Rover, the dog. "Bow wow!" That was his way of saying that he, too, thought it would be a good thing to take home some of the nuts.

Slicko heard the nuts rattling into the other pocket of the boy who had caught her, and then she felt him walking off with her. Through the woods he went, as Slicko could tell, for she heard the rattle and crack of the bushes, as the boy pushed his way through them.

After what seemed to Slicko a long time, she



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fell asleep in the boy's pocket, and, when she awoke, she was in such a bright light that it made her eyes blink very fast. The boy had opened his pocket, and had taken Slicko out in his hands.

"Oh, what have you got, Bob?" asked a small girl, one of the boy's sisters.

"A little squirrel," he answered.

"Where did you get it?" asked another girl.

"I caught it in a trap in the woods, Sallie," the boy answered.

"Oh, how cruel, to catch a poor little squirrel in a trap!" exclaimed the first little girl.

"Oh, I didn't hurt it," said Bob. "And, when it gets tame I'm going to teach it some tricks."

"Are you going to put the squirrel in a cage with a wheel?" asked the girl whose name was Mollie.

"Yes, as soon as papa gets me that kind of a cage," the boy said. "But, until then, I'll let it stay in a box."

"I hope it doesn't get away like Squinty, your pig, did," spoke Sallie.

"Oh, no, I won't let the squirrel get away," said the boy.

"Ha!" thought Slicko. "Squinty the pig! I wonder if this is the boy who made a pet of Squinty. If it is the same one, I am sure he will be kind to me."





"Oh, how cruel, to catch a poor little squirrel in a trap!"  
exclaimed the first girl.

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"Where do you suppose Squinty is now?" asked Sallie.

"Back in the pen with the other pigs," the boy replied. "After he got away, he grew too big to keep for a pet. But this squirrel won't grow too big."

"I'm sorry for that," thought Slicko. "For if I grew big enough I, too, might be allowed to go back to my home. But I will wait and see what will happen. I will be as good as I can, and learn all the tricks I can, and the boy and his sisters will love me."

"Oh, isn't she cute!" cried one of the little girls, as she put her finger on the soft fur of Slicko's back.

"Look out, she might bite!" exclaimed the other little girl.

"Indeed I'll not!" chattered Slicko. "I wouldn't be so impolite as that."

That is what Slicko said, but of course the boy and his sisters could not understand. But they could see that Slicko was very gentle, and, as she lay there, in the boy's warm hand, the two little girls petted her, and loved Slicko.

"Now I'll put her in a box," the boy said, "and give her some nuts to eat and some water to drink."

"That will be fine!" thought Slicko, for she was very thirsty and hungry.



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A little later she found herself in a small wooden box. In one corner were some nuts, in another a dish of water, and in a third corner some nice soft cotton, almost like the kind that comes on the inside of the pods of the milkweed plant.

"Well, this isn't like my home-nest in the tree, nor like Aunt Whitey's nest," thought Slicko, "but as long as I have to stay here, I might as well make the best of it. I can eat and drink, anyhow. I shall not be hungry or thirsty."

Slicko took up a hickory nut in her paws, that were like little hands, and, sitting up on her hind legs, with her tail spread out over her like an umbrella, she began to eat the meat of the nut.

"Oh, look!" cried one of the girls, who was watching. "Come and see the squirrel eat, Sallie!"

"Ha! It isn't so wonderful—just to eat," thought Slicko. "I wonder how those girls would like it, if I came to look on every time *they* ate!"

Slicko could not get away, so she had to eat with the boy's sisters looking on. Not that Slicko minded very much, for she was beginning to like her new home, and she felt sure that she would be in no danger from dogs, or other animals. And if she got enough to eat, water to drink, and



had a nice, warm place to sleep in, what more could a squirrel ask?

Slicko's leg hurt her a little bit, but it was getting better all the while, and she was feeling happier and happier every minute. True, she would have been very glad if her papa and mamma and her sister and brothers had been with her, but then she knew she could not have everything she wanted.

"And it's just wonderful that the same boy who has me had Squinty, the comical pig, for his pet," thought Slicko. "Squinty said the boy was good and kind, and I'm sure he'll teach me some nice tricks. I shall love to learn tricks."

For two or three days Slicko stayed in the box where the boy had first put her. Every day she was given fresh water, and this was what she needed almost more than she did nuts to eat. All animals need water, especially in hot weather, so if ever you have a squirrel, or any other pets, see to it that they have all the cool, clean water they wish to drink.

"I wonder when my new cage is to come, whatever a cage is," thought Slicko, after she had been in the box about a week. "I am anxious to see it, and I wonder what that wheel is the boy spoke about."

Slicko was soon to know, however.

One day, when Slicko was eating nuts in her



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box, she looked up at the top, over which had been fastened a bit of wire so she could not get out, and, looking down at her, Slicko saw the boy's big dog staring in.

"Bow wow!" barked the dog.

"Chatter-chat! Chit-chat-chatter-r-r-r-r-r-r!" went Slicko.

That was her way of saying: "How do you do?"

She did not feel afraid, for she knew the dog could not get at her in the box.

"Oh, Bob! The dog is after your squirrel!" suddenly called Mollie.

"Yes, come quickly!" shouted Sallie.

"Bow wow!" barked the dog. And he seemed to say:

"Don't worry! I wouldn't hurt that little squirrel for the world. I just want to look at her."

"Oh, Rover won't hurt Slicko," said the boy, who had given his new pet the same name as had the squirrel's mamma. In fact, Slicko was so smooth and slick, and so clean, that it would have been hard to get any other name to fit her as well as did Slicko.

"See, the dog and squirrel will be good friends," said the boy. With that he reached in and lifted Slicko out of the box, holding her close to Rover.



Rover put out his red tongue and touched Slicko with it. And Slicko put out her tiny paw and touched Rover. That was her way of shaking hands.

"See, they are friends!" said the boy. "Soon, when Slicko gets a little tamer, I'm going to let her run out of the cage, and go all over the house."

"She may run away, like Squinty, the comical pig," said Mollie.

"Oh, I don't believe she will," answered the boy.

Just then some one called:

"Bob! Bob! Where are you? Come here! The new cage for your squirrel has come!"

"Oh, it's my new home!" thought Slicko. "I wonder what it is like."



## CHAPTER IX

### SLICKO DOES SOME TRICKS

**S**LICKO was put back into the wooden box, and Bob fastened the wire over the top again.

"Ha! The boy didn't need to do that!" thought the little squirrel. "I won't run away—at least not until I see my new house."

The boy and his sisters went to where their mamma had called them, and soon they came running back again. The boy carried a big wire cage, something like the one in which Slicko had once seen a canary bird flying about. But this new cage for Slicko was much larger, and, at one end, was a big round wheel of wire, something like a merry-go-round, only it whirled the other way, like a hoop, and there were no wooden animals, or seats, on this squirrel wheel.

"What can it be for?" thought Slicko.

Bob, the boy, lifted Slicko up out of her little wooden box.

"Let's see how you like your new cage," he said.



"Oh, but there's nothing for her to eat or drink in it," cried one of the girls.

"I'll put in some nuts and water," Bob said. "Come, Slicko, go into your new cage."

Bob opened a little wire door, and thrust Slicko through it into the cage. The door went shut with a click and a slam, that reminded Slicko of the time she had been caught in the trap. She looked around quickly, wondering if there were a trap near her now. But she saw only the clean, new, wire cage, with little dishes for nuts and water, a little covered-over dark place, where she could crawl in during the day, and go to sleep in the dark; and then there was that great big wire wheel, that spun around very easily when Bob touched it with his finger.

"Oh, I'm never going in that!" thought Slicko, somewhat afraid.

She crouched down, and looked carefully all around her new cage. She wanted to see if there were any danger near. But all she saw, through the wires, was the boy, his two sisters and Rover, the dog she had grown to like very much.

"Oh, I guess it will be all right here," thought Slicko. "I will not be afraid."

"Doesn't she look cute in there?" asked Mollie, laughing.

"She certainly does," agreed Sallie.

"You wait until I teach her some tricks,"



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spoke the boy. "Then she'll be worth looking at."

Slicko made up her mind she would learn the tricks as soon as she could.

"Then I'll be like Squinty, the comical pig," she said to herself.

Soon Slicko felt quite at home in her new cage. She went inside the little bedroom, that was pretty dark, even in the daytime. Squirrels, and all wild animals, like to be in the dark, and off by themselves, once in a while.

Inside the little bedroom, which was made of tin and wire, like the rest of the cage, was some soft cotton, and in this Slicko could cuddle up and keep warm, even when winter came. And, as I have said, there was a dish for nuts and another for water. These the boy filled, and soon Slicko was eating her first meal in her new home.

"I wish she'd go in the wheel, and ride it," said Mollie.

"She will, after a while," the boy said. "I know how to make her."

Slicko wondered how he would do it, but she could not guess.

For several days the little jumping squirrel lived in her new cage. The boy and his sisters would come to watch her, and bring her nice things to eat, so Slicko soon became real tame. Often other children would come to look at her.



Sometimes the boy would take her out, and put her in his pocket, as he had done on the day he brought Slicko from the woods, after she had been caught in the trap. Then Slicko would stick her head out, just a little bit, and all the children would exclaim:

"Oh, isn't she cute!"

Slicko did not know exactly what "cute" meant, but she tried to be as nice and polite as she could.

"Have you taught your squirrel any tricks yet?" asked Mollie of her brother, one day.

"No, but I am going to try one now. Do you want to watch?"

"Indeed I do!" said the little girl.

Slicko saw the boy take all the nuts out of the eating dish.

"I wonder what he is doing that for," the little squirrel thought. "I'm hungry, and I want to eat those nuts." But the boy took every one.

"What are you going to do?" asked his sister.

"You'll soon see," he answered with a laugh. "I am going to teach Slicko her first trick."

Then the boy placed two or three nice, sweet, juicy chestnuts inside the wheel of the squirrel cage. This wheel went around and around, just as a barrel rolls over the ground, only the wire wheel of the squirrel cage stayed right in the



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same place, whirling about as does a merry-go-round.

"Now, when Slicko goes in to get the nuts, she'll make the wheel go around," the boy said to his sisters. "The faster she runs, the faster the wheel will go, and she'll be doing a trick."

"Oh, let's watch her!" cried Sallie.

"Well, you may watch all you like," said Slicko to herself, "but I am not going in that wheel. I'm afraid!"

So she stayed in the other part of the cage, looking at the chestnuts, and wishing she could get them, for she was getting more and more hungry every minute.

"Maybe I can pull one out without going in the wheel myself," thought Slicko. She reached her paw in through the little round hole that led into the wheel from her cage. She could almost touch the chestnuts, but not quite.

"There! She's going in!" cried one of the girls softly.

But Slicko did not go.

"If she wasn't afraid, she'd go in and have a ride," the boy said. "Come on, Slicko," he called, "it won't hurt you."

Slicko did not want to. However, she kept getting more and more hungry, and those chestnuts looked so good!

"I'm going to try it!" said the little jumping



squirrel to herself, finally. "I don't believe that boy would do me any harm."

Very slowly and carefully, Slicko stepped into the moving wheel. It rocked gently to and fro. As soon as the squirrel was all the way inside, it moved more. She felt as though she were falling and then, so that she should not fall, she took two or three little steps.

The wire wheel seemed to slide out from under her. It went whirling around, and the faster Slicko ran, the faster the wheel went. The little squirrel stayed right in the same place, but the wire wheel went round and round under her pattering feet.

"There she goes!" cried Sallie.

"Oh, see how fast she can run!" exclaimed Mollie.

"Yes, she has learned to do the trick," said the boy. "I thought she would get so hungry that she would go in after the chestnuts, and then she'd make the wheel whirl."

And that was just what Slicko had done. She was so surprised at the fast motion of the wheel that she did not think to eat the nuts inside. But now, after whirling about for some time, Slicko did not run so fast. The wheel went slower and slower, and finally stopped. The nuts, which had been rattling around with Slicko, dropped down beside her, and she began



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to eat them, sitting up on her hind legs, and holding them in her front paws, while she gnawed off the shell.

"Oh, isn't she just too cute for anything!" cried Sallie.

"Just lovely," said her sister, Mollie.

"Well, that's one trick," the boy said. "It's the easiest of all. Now that she knows the wheel won't hurt her, she'll often take a whirl in it."

"Yes," said Slicko to herself, as she heard Bob say this, "I think I shall."

And, from then on, Slicko was no longer afraid of the whirling wheel of her cage. Bob did not have to put any more nuts in it to get her to go in. Slicko liked it, and went in herself, several times a day. It gave her something to do—like playing a game.

The cage where Slicko was kept was too small to let her run about and jump very much, and the wheel was just the very thing. On that, Slicko could pretend she was running a race, as she used to do with her brothers and sister in the woods.

"Oh, I wonder what has become of Chatter, and all the rest of them," thought Slicko many times, as she thought of her former home. "And I wonder if I shall ever see them again!"

"What are you doing, Bob?" asked Mollie,



one day as she saw her brother pasting some paper over a little wooden hoop. It was just like those the men in the circus jump through, only smaller.

"I am getting ready for another trick for Slicko," he said.

"Do you think you can get her to jump through one of those paper covered hoops?" asked Sallie.

"I think so," replied Bob. "I'm going to try."

Slicko was quite tame by this time, and often would be allowed to run about the room, being let out of her cage. Sometimes Bob would sit in a chair, and put some nuts in his pocket. Then Slicko would run along on the floor, crawl up Bob's leg, dive down into his pocket, and pull out the nuts.

"That's another trick," Bob would say with a laugh. "My squirrel is getting to be very smart!"

"But how are you going to get her to jump through a paper hoop?" asked Mollie.

"I'll soon show you," said Bob.

By this time he had two or three hoops all ready, pasted over with thin red, white and blue paper, so that they looked very pretty indeed.

"Now, Slicko," said Bob, as he took the little squirrel out of her wire cage, "you are going to



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learn a new trick to-day. And I want you to pay strict attention, and do as I tell you."

Bob took a piece of sweet apple, of which Slicko was very fond, and put it on top of a little box on the dining-room table. Then he put Slicko down at the other end of the table, and stood near her, with one of the paper hoops in his hand.

"Now, Slicko," said Bob, as he pointed at the apple, "that is for you, if you do as I want you to do. Go get the apple, Slicko."

Slicko knew what apple was. She could smell it, and she thought it must be meant for her. She scampered toward it, but, when she had almost reached it she found Bob holding a paper hoop out in front of her. The hoop was between Slicko and the apple.

Slicko started to go around to one side, to get out of the way of the hoop, but Bob moved it, so that it was still in front of her.

"Well, I can go the other way," thought Slicko. But, when she turned the other way, there was still the paper hoop in front of her. It was between her and the apple, and she wanted that apple very much.

"Ha!" thought Slicko, "if Bob doesn't take that paper hoop out of my way, I'll jump right through it and get the apple anyhow!"



## CHAPTER X

### SLICKO RUNS AWAY

“**C**OME on, get the apple, Slicko!” called Bob.

“How can she, when you keep putting that paper hoop in front of her?” asked Bob’s sister Mollie.

“She’ll go right through it,” said Sallie.

“That’s just what I want her to do,” Bob answered, with a laugh. “It will be a fine trick.”

Slicko did not understand all of this talk, but she did want that apple, and when she heard Bob say “trick,” she began to understand that, after all, perhaps the hoop was only put in front of her for fun.

So the next time she ran toward the piece of apple on the table, and the boy moved the paper hoop in front of her, Slicko gave a sudden little jump, and, right through the paper she went, breaking a hole in it, and landing close to the piece of apple.

“Hurrah!” cried the boy. “There she goes!”

“Oh, wasn’t that cute!” exclaimed Mollie.

“Just too sweet for anything,” spoke Sallie.

“I hope she didn’t hurt herself!”



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"Hurt herself? Of course not!" cried Bob. "How could she, when the paper was so soft and thin? And she has learned another trick now, haven't you, Slicko?"

Slicko was too busy eating the apple to answer, even if she could have spoken boy language. She sat up on her hind legs, with her tail spread out over her head, and, holding the bit of apple in her paws, which were like little hands, she nibbled at the sweet pulp.

"Will she do it again?" asked Mollie.

"I guess so," answered the boy. "I'll try her once more. This time I'll give her a nut."

When Slicko had finished eating the apple, Bob took her gently up in his hands, and set her down at one end of the table. On the other end he placed some pieces of hickory nut meats, with the shells off.

"Ah, ha!" thought Slicko. "They look good! I can eat them without stopping to gnaw off the hard shell."

The little jumping squirrel started toward the pile of nut meats, but, before she could reach them, Bob put in front of her another hoop, covered with paper.

Just as she had done at first, Slicko tried to run to one side, but Bob kept the hoop in front of her. Slicko had forgotten about jumping





Slicko gave a sudden little jump, and, right through the  
paper she went.

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through, even though she had done it only a little while before.

Most animals are that way when first they learn a new trick. They forget very easily, until they have done it over and over again. It was this way with Slicko.

But as Bob kept the hoop in front of her, and as she kept smelling the nice nuts at the other end of the table, it came into Slicko's head that she must jump through the paper of the hoop to get them, just as she had done to get the piece of apple.

"Here I go!" thought the little squirrel.

She gave another little jump, and right through the second paper hoop she went, coming down on the table close to the nut meats, which she began to eat; and very good they tasted, indeed.

"Ha! She did the trick again!" cried Bob.

"What a cunning squirrel!" exclaimed Mollie.

"She's just too dear for anything," said Sallie.

Slicko understood a little of this talk, and she was glad she had pleased the children. She was beginning to be very happy in her new home, and she liked Bob and his sisters very much.

The boy had Slicko jump through the paper hoops several more times that day, and then he put her back in the big wire cage, and let her



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rest. Wild animals do not like to be doing tricks all the while. They get tired just as you do.

The next day Slicko did the hoop tricks again, and soon she was so smart that she knew, as soon as she saw Bob with the paper-covered things, that she was to do her jumping trick. She did not have to have a piece of apple placed at one end of the table to make her jump, now.

But, each time, after she was through doing her little tricks, she was given something good to eat. That is always the way to train wild animals or pets—be kind to them when they have done what you want them to do.

Slicko lived in the house with the boy for several weeks. The weather had gotten colder now, and winter would soon be here. Slicko could tell this, for sometimes the windows of the room, in which her cage stood, were left open, and she could feel the cold wind. But her fur coat was growing warm and thick now, and she would not have minded being outdoors, no matter how cold it was, if she had plenty to eat.

But, after all, Slicko was rather glad that she had a good home for the coming winter. She remembered how, when she had lived in the home-nest, she had heard her papa and mamma talking in their chatter language about how hard



it was, sometimes, to find things to eat, when the white snow covered the ground. Squirrels always store away nuts, but sometimes they can not get enough, and sometimes the winter is so long that they eat up all they have in their nest, before it is time for spring to come and bring other food.

"But that can't happen to me here," thought Slicko. "No matter how cold it is outside, or how much snow there is, I shall be warm in this house, and Bob and his sisters will give me enough to eat. After all, maybe it is a good thing Bob caught me and brought me here."

Bob taught his pet squirrel other tricks. He taught Slicko to crawl right up to his pocket, and go to sleep there. He also taught her to go into his pockets after lumps of sugar, and other good things to eat. When she had found them, she would come out and sit on his shoulder to eat them. This always made the children who saw it laugh, and they thought Slicko was a very cute squirrel indeed.

Bob's sisters tried to teach Slicko tricks. But they wanted to make a sort of doll of her, and, though Slicko was a girl squirrel, she knew nothing of dolls.

"Oh, wouldn't she look cute dressed up in one of my dolls' dresses?" asked Mollie of Sallie, one day.



"Yes, indeed! Let's try it!" exclaimed Sallie.

They took Slicko out of her cage, and, though they handled her very gently, the little squirrel did not like being put inside a doll's dress.

"Oh, isn't she too cute!" cried Mollie.

"Yes," said Sallie. "Now let's put her in the doll carriage and wheel her about."

But this was too much for Slicko. It was bad enough to be dressed up as a doll, but when it came to being put in a thing on wheels, and ridden about the room, that was more than Slicko would stand. She did not mind her wire wheel in the cage, but she did not like to be wheeled in the carriage.

Out she jumped, and with her paws she pulled off the doll's dress that had been tied on her. Then, chattering as loudly as she could, she ran to her cage, and hid in the little place where she slept. There Mollie and Sallie could not get her.

"Oh, well, never mind. Let's play with our real dolls," said Mollie. "Maybe Bob wouldn't like us to dress up his squirrel."

"All right," agreed Sallie. And Slicko was glad to be left alone.

She did not mind when Bob taught her tricks.

"If I learn a number of them," thought Slicko, "I shall be as smart as Squinty, the comical pig, or as Mappo, the monkey, or Tum Tum, the



jolly elephant. I wonder if I shall ever see them again."

Slicko felt a little sad when she thought of her animal friends. Then she began thinking of her father and mother, of her sister and brothers, and of Aunt Whitey.

"I wonder where Aunt Whitey could be?" thought Slicko. "I should like to see her again."

At these times Slicko became a little lonesome and homesick. But, whenever she was beginning to get too sad, Bob would come, take her out of the cage, and either give her something good to eat, or put her through some of her tricks. Then Slicko would be happy once more.

As the days went on, Slicko became so tame that the door of her cage was never shut. She could come and go as she pleased, and she roamed all about the house. She would come to the dinner table, and sit up near Bob, who would feed her from his plate. And then she would scramble into his pocket, to get a bit of sugar.

The winter came, with its cold and snow. Slicko stayed in the warm house. Then the days began to get warmer. Spring was coming. One day it was warm enough for the windows of the room, where Slicko's cage stood, to be opened. The little squirrel smelled the fresh



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air of spring. She seemed to smell the cool, green woods, where the trees were just beginning to put on their new green dresses of leaves.

Something seemed to be calling to Slicko. She heard the hum of bees, the song of birds and the chatter of other squirrels. A strange feeling came over Slicko. She wanted to run away to the woods.

She looked all around the room. No one was there. The door of her cage was open. Softly, on her pattering feet, Slicko ran to the window. She climbed to the sill, looked out into the garden, and off to the woods. Then Slicko jumped down into the soft, green grass, and ran away.



## CHAPTER XI

### SLICKO'S BIG ADVENTURE

**S**LICKO had been a tame squirrel for several months. Before that, and for a longer time, she had been just a little wild squirrel, living in the woods, and doing as all wild squirrels do.

So, when she jumped out of the window and ran away, she became, for the time being, just as wild as she ever had been. For a little while she forgot all the tricks Bob had taught her, and she forgot the nice pieces of apples and the nuts he used to give her. Slicko was just the same, now, as were her brothers, or her sister—a little, wild animal.

She ran over the grass, crouching down low, and taking big jumps so no one would see her. Most of all, Slicko wanted to keep out of the way of Muffins, the big black cat at Bob's house.

This cat was not a good friend of Slicko's. Often, when the little squirrel was not watching, the cat would come quietly up close to her, and look at Slicko with very hungry eyes. Sometimes Bob would see Muffins, and drive her away.



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"Muffins wouldn't hurt your squirrel," said Mollie, who liked the cat very much.

"Of course she wouldn't," said Sallie. "Rover, your dog, wouldn't hurt Slicko, so why would our cat?"

"Well, a cat is different from a dog," Bob would say. "A cat can't help sneaking up, and wanting to jump on anything it sees moving. But a dog only barks, and makes a big fuss. He doesn't really do any harm. Of course I don't mean to say Muffins would intend to do Slicko any harm, but I won't give Muffins a chance."

So Bob never let the big cat come near his squirrel, and Slicko was glad of it, for Muffins had very hungry eyes. And now, when Slicko was running away, and Bob was not there to look after her, and when there was no strong wire cage to run and hide in, Slicko was very careful. She looked on both sides of her, as she ran along over the grass. Slicko was not going to be caught, if she could avoid it.

The little squirrel came to a tree, and up it she scrambled as fast as she could go. It was the first tree she had climbed since Bob had caught her in the trap, and Slicko was glad to find she had not forgotten how. Her leg, that had been pinched in the trap, was now as strong as the other ones.



Sticking her claws in the bark of the tree, Slicko went up, away to the top.

"There!" exclaimed the little squirrel, "if Muffins comes after me, she'll have trouble in reaching me."

Cats can climb trees, too, almost as well as squirrels can, though not so fast. But a cat does not very often go way up to the top of a tree, as Slicko had done.

The little runaway squirrel sat down on a tree branch and looked about her. The tree was just putting out its first green leaves, and the wind was blowing the branches gently to and fro, like a swing.

"Oh, this is lovely!" thought Slicko. "It is much nicer than my wheel in the cage. I am glad I ran away. I am never going back in the big house again."

You see, after all, though wild animals may seem contented to be pets, they always want to be free as they were at first.

Slicko began to look all over the tree to see if any nuts grew on it. She was not yet old enough to know that there would be no nuts until fall. Nor could she tell that the tree she was in was a pear tree, and never grew nuts. There would be no pears, either, until late in the summer.

Slicko was beginning to feel hungry. True,



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she had eaten her breakfast before running away, but now she felt hungry again. There seemed to be nothing to eat in the tree where she was hiding. It was no fun to be hungry.

"I must see about getting something to eat," thought Slicko. "I'll stay up here awhile, and then I'll go down and hunt for some nuts or bits of apple. Oh, I'll have a fine time, and I won't have to jump through paper hoops, or do any tricks."

Pretty soon Slicko, who sat on a limb of the tree where she could look at the window of the room where she used to live, heard the voice of Bob, her little master.

"I say!" cried Bob, "have any of you seen Slicko?"

"She was in her cage, a little while ago," said Mollie. "Isn't she there now?"

"No, and her cage is open, and so is the window of the room," went on Bob. "I'm afraid she has run away, or else maybe Muffins has caught her."

"Oh, you bad boy, to say such a thing!" cried Sallie. "Muffins wouldn't take Slicko. More likely it's Rover!"

"Rover wouldn't either," said Bob. "I wonder where Slicko can be. Here, Slicko! Slicko!" he called. "Come and get some nuts! Come and get some sugar!"



Slicko, up in the tree, heard Bob, but, though she was very hungry, she would not go down and get in his pocket, as she used to do. Slicko made up her little squirrel mind that as long as she *had* run away, she would not go back so soon.

"I want to have a little fun," she said to herself.

Bob called and called again. He looked all over for Slicko, even up in the trees, but Slicko managed to hide behind a leafy branch, and Bob could not see her. Bob even called Rover, thinking the dog might be able to help him find the lost squirrel.

From her perch in the tree, Slicko saw Bob and Rover running about. The dog barked:

"Bow wow! Bow wow! Bow wow!" as if he were calling Slicko to come down. But the little squirrel was not yet ready.

"I know what I'll do," said Bob. "I'll get some nuts and put them where Slicko can see them, close by the open window. I'll set her cage there, too, on a chair in the room. Maybe she's lost, and can't find her way home. But perhaps she can smell the nuts, and when she comes for them, she'll see her cage, and be glad to go back into it."

"Oh, yes, do that," said Mollie. "Once when my canary bird flew away, I hung the cage on



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a tree outside, and left the door open. And, pretty soon, Dick flew back into it."

"Well, I hope Slicko comes back to her cage," said Bob.

But Slicko had no idea of coming back so soon.

In a little while Bob had put some nuts on the ground outside the window, and near them, on a chair inside the room, he put the squirrel's cage.

"Now I'll hide and watch to see if Slicko comes back," said Bob. But Slicko did not want to be seen, so she stayed up in the tree. She was more hungry than ever, but she would not go down and get the nuts. After a while Bob got tired of hiding and waiting.

"I'll just go off and play ball," he said to his sisters. "When I come back, maybe Slicko will be in her cage."

Slicko waited until Bob had gone. The little squirrel looked down, and seeing Mollie and Sallie off on the front porch, playing with their dolls, she thought it would be safe to go down and get a few nuts.

Very carefully Slicko climbed down the tree. Stopping now and then, to make sure there was no danger, she reached the pile of nuts. She ate some, and oh! how good they tasted.

Then, all at once, Slicko heard something



coming softly through the grass behind her. It was so soft that it sounded only like the wind blowing, but Slicko knew that it was not the wind.

Slicko turned quickly, just in time to see Muffins, the cat, make a spring for her.

"Oh my!" cried Slicko, and, turning quickly, the little squirrel made a mad dash for the pear tree. She had a nut in her paws, but she dropped that in running.

"Meaouw! Wow!" snarled Muffins, the big, black cat. She gave a spring, sticking out her claws, and trying to catch Slicko, but she was just too late. Slicko reached the tree, and up it she went almost to the very tip-top.

Muffins followed, and ran up the tree trunk a little way, but she did not go as far as Slicko had gone.

"My! That was the time she almost caught me!" thought Slicko, her little heart beating very fast. "I must be more careful after this. And oh! those nuts were so good. But I won't dare go down after them again until it's dark, when Muffins can't see me."

Slicko stayed in the tree all the rest of that day. She could see the pile of nuts on the ground, but, though she was very, very hungry, she did not dare go down to get any for fear of Muffins.



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Slicko saw Bob come and look at the nuts. The boy cried out:

"Oh, my squirrel has been here! Some of the nuts are gone! Slicko is somewhere around here!"

But, though Bob looked in all the trees around the house, he could not find Slicko. Slicko saw Bob, though.

The little squirrel stayed in the tree all that night. But she did not have a very good time. It was cold, and it rained, and there was no hole, and no nest, into which Slicko could crawl to keep warm. She just had to shiver. And she was more hungry than ever, too.

"Oh dear! Running away isn't as much fun as I thought it would be!" said Slicko. "Tomorrow, when Bob puts out the nuts again, and leaves the cage open, I'm going to run back into it. I have had enough of living like this. I had rather do tricks, such as jumping through paper hoops, than be cold and hungry."

But the next day Bob went away, and did not put out any nuts for his little squirrel. And those he had put out were carried away by the rats.

So Slicko got very few of them to eat, and she was quite hungry. She managed to find a few old acorns in the woods, but they were not so good as the nuts, apples and sugar Bob and



his sisters used to feed her. And, as the window of the room was not open, and as the cage was not put out, Slicko could not run back home again.

"Isn't Bob going to try to catch his squirrel?" asked Mollie of Sallie, on the second day.

"No, I heard him say he guessed she was gone for good," said Sallie.

"Well, I haven't—I'm here yet, and I'm coming back to my cage—that is when I see it," Slicko said to herself.

That afternoon Slicko, perched in the top of her tree, saw one of the attic windows of Bob's house open.

"Ha!" exclaimed the little squirrel. "I can jump in there from my tree. I'll do it."

Slicko scrambled up to the highest branch. From there she could easily jump in through the attic window, and this she did.

She looked around, and she was glad when she saw some butternuts on the floor of the attic. Slicko soon gnawed a hole in one, and ate out the sweet meat. Then she felt much better.

It was nice and warm in the attic, and there was a pile of old clothes there. On these Slicko lay down and went to sleep.

When Slicko awoke, it was all dark. She had slept until it was night. She sat up on her hind legs and listened. She could hear noth-



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ing. The house was very quiet. Slicko looked at the window by which she had entered. It was tightly shut now.

All of a sudden Slicko felt thirsty. She knew there was no water up in the attic, but there was plenty down stairs in the kitchen. Bob always left a pan full there on the floor for his pet.

"I'll go down stairs and get a drink in the kitchen," said Slicko to herself.

Squirrels can see in the dark, almost as well as can owls, as I told you before. Soon Slicko was making her way safely down the front stairs.

As she got to the kitchen, she saw a light burning low. And, by this light Slicko could see a man, with a piece of black cloth over his face, taking knives and forks and spoons from a table, and putting them into his pocket.

Slicko, of course, did not know that the things were knives and forks and spoons. She only knew they were the things Bob and his sisters, and father and mother ate with. And, when she saw the man putting them into his pocket, Slicko thought they might be something good for her to eat.

"That must be Bob's papa," thought Slicko. "Well, I'll give him a surprise. I'll run up his leg and go into his pocket. Then he'll know I'm home again."



## CHAPTER XII

### SLICKO FINDS HER NEST

**S**CAMPERING softly over the oilcloth of the kitchen floor, Slicko came close to the man. Slicko thought it was Bob's papa, but it was not. I'll soon tell you who the man was.

"I do hope he has some sugar for me," thought Slicko, for sometimes Bob's papa would play at tricks and games with the little squirrel, and do just as Bob did—hide things in his pocket.

Slicko was almost at the man's leg. Her little claws made a patter-patter-pat sound on the floor oilcloth. The man heard it, and started.

"A rat!" he cried. "I don't like rats!"

"The idea of calling me a rat!" thought Slicko. "I'll soon show you who I am, Mr. Bob's papa."

The next moment Slicko scrambled up the man's leg, sticking her claws in the soft cloth of his trousers.

"Get away from me! Get away from me!" the man cried, very much excited, and he struck at Slicko. "Get off me!" and the man was



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fairly screaming now. "Get away! I hate rats! I'm afraid of 'em!"

"Why, he's worse than Tum Tum, the elephant," said Slicko to herself. "But maybe he's only fooling. I'll climb up on his shoulder and sit there. Then maybe he'll give me something to eat."

Quickly Slicko scrambled up to the man's shoulder. She put her soft, cold nose on his neck.

"Oh! Oh! Go away! A rat! It'll bite me!" cried the man.

He leaped aside and with his hand brushed Slicko away. She fell on the kitchen table. And then, all of a sudden the whole house was filled with light. Slicko sat up on the table in time to see the man give a jump through the window, while from his pocket fell a shower of knives and forks and spoons. For the man was a burglar—a thief—and he had come in the night to rob.

Out of the window he jumped. Slicko could see him very well, for the electric lights were turned on now. Up stairs Bob's papa had heard the burglar cry out, and he had switched on the lights.

"What a funny man," thought Slicko of the burglar, "to jump out of the window as I did. I wonder why he is running away."





H. H. Tooker.

Slicko sat up on the table in time to see the man give  
a jump through the window.

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Slicko saw a pan of water on the floor. She scrambled down and took a long drink, for she was quite thirsty. But she was not at all afraid.

"I wish that man had let me sit on his shoulder," she said to herself. "He might have given me a nut, or a piece of sugar. And he called me a rat—I don't like that."

After getting her drink, Slicko sat up on the table again, and waited. She heard voices talking, and people coming down stairs. Bob and his father came into the kitchen.

"Oh, look! There's my squirrel Slicko!" cried Bob. "She's come back!"

"Chatter! Chatter! Chat-chat-chatter-r-r-r!" chirped Slicko. "Of course I'm your little pet squirrel come back again. I'm sorry I ran away." Only, of course, Bob did not understand this.

"What has happened?" asked the voice of Bob's mother.

"Slicko has come back," said Bob.

"Is that all?"

"No, something else happened," said Bob's father, "and I guess we have Slicko to thank that our house was not robbed."

"Our house robbed! What do you mean?"

"Why the kitchen window has been broken open, and here is some of our silver scattered



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about," said Bob's father. "I heard a man yell something about a rat, and I turned on the lights. He must have been a burglar, but he got away."

"What frightened him?" asked Bob. By this time Slicko was sitting on Bob's shoulder, eating a lump of sugar he had gotten for her from the pantry.

"I think Slicko, your squirrel, frightened him," said the boy's father. "That must have been it. The burglar came in here to rob us. In the night Slicko came back, somehow, and probably she tried to make friends with him, as she does with you, not knowing who he was. The man must have thought Slicko was a rat, and, being afraid, he ran off. Slicko saved us from being robbed, for see, the man dropped most of the things he took. Your squirrel is very smart, Bob. She scared away the thief."

"She is a good little squirrel," said Bob. "I am glad she came back to me."

Slicko was put back into her cage for the rest of the night. She was glad she had come back to Bob. Everybody went to bed.

The next day Slicko did her tricks again, and learned some new ones. She had many nuts and apples to eat.

Still Slicko was not happy. The weather grew warmer. It was very warm in the house,



but Slicko was not allowed to be out of her cage.

"I don't want her to run away again," said Bob.

Poor Slicko was now very mournful. As the warm days came, she wanted to be free to run in the shady woods. She would rather have sat swinging on the branch of a tree, than whirl around in the wire wheel of her cage.

"Bob," said the boy's father to him one day, "don't you think your squirrel would be happier if you let it go out in the woods to live?"

"What! Let my pet squirrel go?" asked Bob, in surprise.

"Yes," answered his father. "Slicko is not happy in her cage now. She might have been, in the winter, but now it is summer, and she ought to be out in the open. I think she wants to go."

Oh, how much Slicko hoped she could go! Her little heart beat very fast, as she looked through the bars of her cage.

"Let Slicko go!" said Bob softly. "Oh, I can't do that!"

"Slicko did us a very great favor," said Bob's father. "She frightened away the burglar. I think, as a reward, you ought to let her go, Bob."

Bob said nothing for a long while. Then he spoke softly.



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"Very well, father," he said. "I'll let Slicko go free!"

Bob took the cage, with his pet in it, to the edge of the woods. He opened the little wire door.

"You may go, Slicko," said Bob. "Go off to the woods where you belong. I'll set you free, but I hope you will come and see me, sometime."

"Chatter-chatter-chatter-r-r-r-r-r!" chirped Slicko. She sprang out of the cage, and stood upright for a moment on the ground. Then, she scrambled up on Bob's shoulder and put her cold, soft nose on his cheek. That was her way of kissing him good-bye.

Down scrambled Slicko, and off to the woods she ran.

"Good-bye, Slicko, my little jumping squirrel!" called Bob, as he went back to the house with the empty cage. And yet, after all, he felt happy that he had let Slicko go.

Slicko ran on and on through the woods. All that day she wandered about. She found a spring and got a drink of water, and in a field she found an early apple tree, and ate an apple.

The next day, as Slicko was jumping through the woods, she came to a tree that she was sure she had seen before. Half way up was a big lump, on which she knew she had often sat. A



little farther up was a broken limb, and, close to that limb was a hole.

"Why, that's the nest where I used to live," said Slicko. "I wonder if papa and mamma, and Chatter and Fluffy and Nutto have come back! I'm going up to see."

Up the tree scrambled Slicko. She looked in her old nest. Something inside it moved.

"Hello!" said Slicko.

"Why—why—why it's Slicko—come back!" cried Chatter. "Papa—Mamma! Nutto, Fluffy! Come here. Slicko has come back!"

Out of the nest rushed all the Squirrel family. They sat on their tails and looked at Slicko.

"My! How she has grown!" cried her mother, patting Slicko with her paws.

"How long have you been here?" asked Slicko. "That time you sent me to Aunt Whitey's, I couldn't find her—she wasn't home."

"No, Slicko," said her papa, "your aunt had hurriedly moved to another nest. We didn't know it when we sent you there. And, not long ago, we all came back here. For it is safe now. The hunter-man and his dog have gone from these woods."

"And so we are all together again," said Fluffy. "I'm glad."

"So am I!" exclaimed Slicko.

"But where have you been—and what hap-



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pened to you?" asked the mamma squirrel.

"Oh, I have had so many adventures!" cried Slicko. "I can jump through paper hoops, I can crawl in Bob's pocket and get sugar, and I scared away a burglar!"

"My, you *did* have some adventures," said Mrs. Squirrel. "But come in now, and have some dinner."

And so that was the end of Slicko's adventures for a while. She got safely back to her nest, and she lived there with her father and mother, and sister and brothers, for many years.

Sometimes she would meet Squinty, the comical pig, or Mappo, the merry monkey. And that reminds me. I have some stories to tell you about him. But I shall have to put them in another book. It will be named "Mappo, the Merry Monkey," and in it you may read all about his many adventures.

"Are you going to run away again, Slicko?" asked Nutto, one day about a week after his sister came back.

"No, I am only going to run up to the top of this tree, and down again," said the little squirrel, and she did.

THE END



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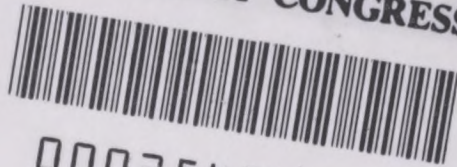








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